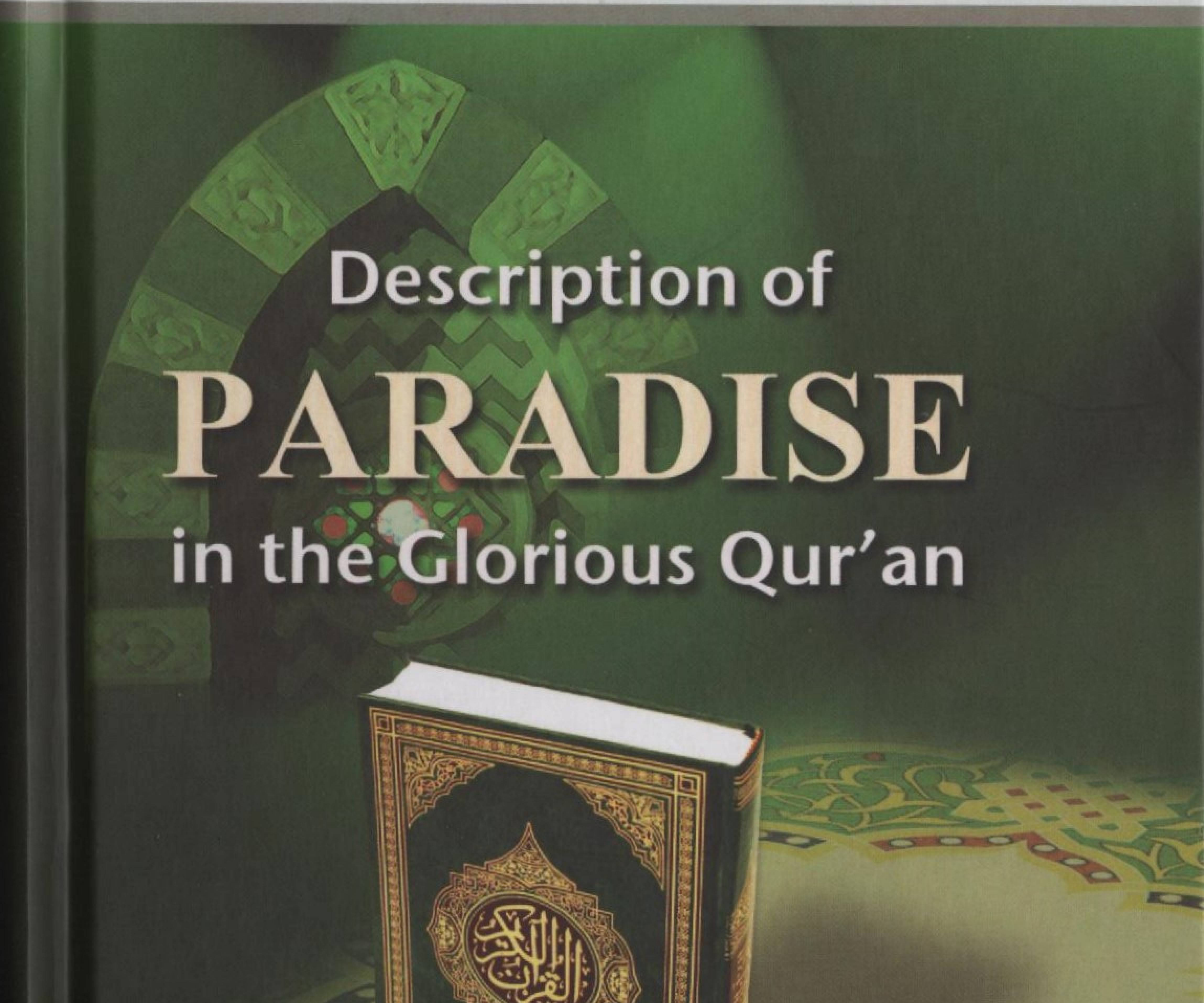

Description of PARADISE in the Glorious Qur'an

By: Abdul-Halim ibn Muhammad Nassar As-Salafi

DARUSSALAM

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DARUSSALAM
GLOBAL LEADER IN ISLAMIC BOOKS

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

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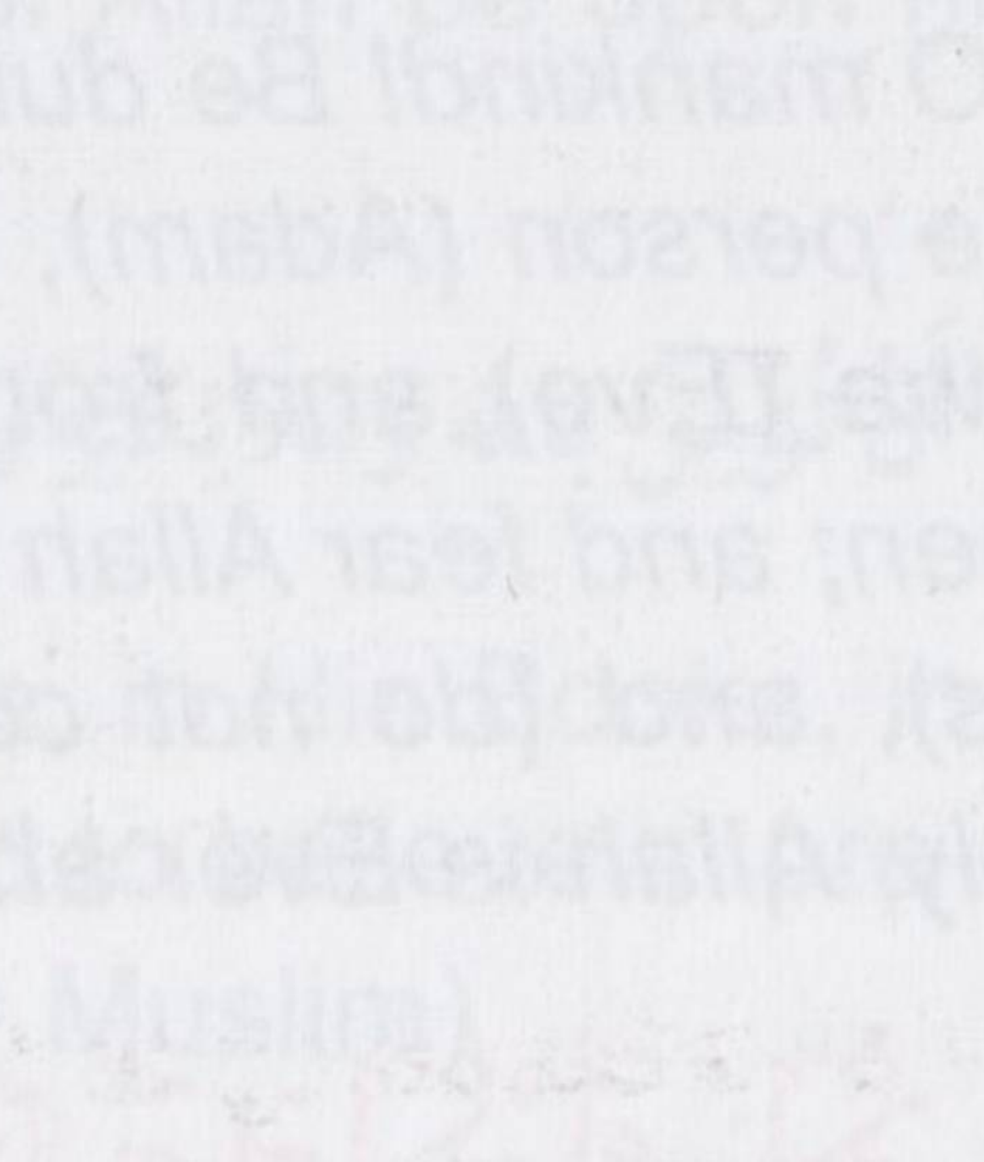

INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him; we seek for His help, forgiveness and guidance. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our own souls and misdeeds. None can mislead whomsoever Allah guides, and none can guide whomsoever Allah causes to go astray.

I testify that there is no deity worthy of being worshiped except Allah. He is One and He has no partner. I equally testify that Muhammad is the slave of Allah and His Messenger.

Allah says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسۡلِمُونَ ١٠٢﴾

"O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), and die not except in a state of Islaam (as Muslims (with complete submission to Allah). (Aal 'Imraan 3:102)

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُواْ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفۡسٖ وَٰحِدَةٖ وَخَلَقَ مِنۡهَا زَوۡجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنۡهُمَا رِجَالٗا
كَثِيرٗا وَنِسَآءٗۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلۡأَرۡحَامَۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ رَقِيبٗا ١﴾

"O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife Hawwa (Eve) and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you." (An-Nisaa'a' 4:1)

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَقُولُواْ قَوۡلٗا سَدِيدٗا ٧٠ يُصۡلِحۡ لَكُمۡ أَعۡمَٰلَكُمۡ
وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡ ذُنُوبَكُمۡۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدۡ فَازَ فَوۡزًا عَظِيمًا ٧١﴾

"O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace of allah be upon him), he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise)." (Al-Ahzaab 33:70,71)

To proceed, indeed, the best speech is the Book of Allah and the best guidance is that of Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him. The worst of all affairs are new things introduced into the religion and every introduced thing is *bid'ah* [innovation]; and every *bid'ah* is error.

Writing about Paradise is of great importance in view of its significance in the belief of a Muslim. This belief makes him eligible for enjoyment of the bliss and the happiness of the Hereafter. It is not a belief that is limited to the life of this finite and ephemeral world only as compared to the everlasting Hereafter. Rather, it is a great creed that links the life of man in this world to that of the Hereafter so that his vision will not be restricted to this world alone but extends to the Hereafter.

Belief in Paradise is one of the fundamentals of faith. The

Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about faith and he answered,

”أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ ،وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الآخِرِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ“

"Faith is to believe in Allah, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers and in the Last Day; and to believe in pre-decree, its good and bad." (Recorded by Muslim)

Belief in the Last Day entails believing in the Unseen that includes Paradise. Though we have not seen it with our eyes or felt it with our hands, we must have absolute, complete and certain belief in it. Our proof for this is the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

The Qur'an is the Book revealed by the One Who created Paradise and its bliss. He is also the One Who created its dwellers, guided them on the path to it, prepared it for them and made it known to them.

The *Sunnah* is the report attributed to the one who has entered Paradise, walked on its soil and reached the Lot Tree in Paradise. Allah says:

﴿أَفَتُمَٰرُونَهُۥ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ ١٢ وَلَقَدۡ رَءَاهُ نَزۡلَةً أُخۡرَىٰ ١٣ عِندَ سِدۡرَةِ ٱلۡمُنتَهَىٰ ١٤
عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ ٱلۡمَأۡوَىٰٓ ١٥﴾

"Will you then dispute with him [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] about what he saw (during the Mi'raaj: (Ascent of the Prophet over the seven heavens). And indeed he [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] saw him (Jibreel (Gabriel)) at a second descent (i.e. another time)near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass). near it is the Paradise of Abode." (An-Najm 53:12-15)

The Glorious Qur'an has described Paradise in the most perfect way. The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, has also done the same in the clearest manner that such description has left an amazing impact in the hearts of the earliest Muslims from amongst the Companions – may Allah be pleased with them. This impact transformed their life from that of the age of ignorance to a great life filled with perfect faith and true conviction in the everlasting life of the Hereafter in the blissful Paradise. There are many instances of this from the *Sunnah*.

The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, walked all over the land to deliver the message of his Lord. He did so alone and was been driven away from one place after another in the course of that. He would be accused of sorcery, magic or lying. The people of Taif stoned him that his noble face bled and was forced to return to Makkah.

It was during these difficult situations that Allah sent him helpers from Madinah who swore allegiance to him and expressed their readiness to defend and sacrifice their lives for him and his religion in the face of enmity from all human races. What then is their reward for this great sacrifice? Can it be compensated with huge amount of money or worldly statuses?

The answer is: No. Their reward is rather the garden of Paradise which is, today, not seen or felt.

Imaam Ahmad – may Allah have mercy upon him – recorded on the authority of Jabir bin 'Abdullah – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – who narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, spent ten years in Makkah (calling people to Islam) and following them into their places of gathering such as Ukaz, Majannah and during *Hajj* seasons in Mina. He would say to them,

"مَنْ يُؤْوِينِي؟ مَنْ يَنْصُرُنِي؟ حَتَّى أُبَلِّغَ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّي وَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ"

'Who is ready to give me refuge? Who is ready to help me so that I can deliver the message of my Lord and have Paradise as reward for such help?!'

(The situation was so difficult for Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) that a man would set out from Yemen or Mudar and his people would come to him and tell him, 'Beware of that Qurayshi man (meaning Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) lest he tempts you!' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, would walk among the Qurayshi men and they would point their fingers at him (with the aim of warning people against him) until Allah sent us to him from Yathrib and we provided him with refuge and believed in him. A man from among us would come to him and declare his acceptance of Islam. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, would recite the Qur'an to him and the man would then return to his family and all of them would embrace Islam through him until there was no household of *Ansaar* that did have members who were Muslims, practicing their Islam publicly.

Then we (the *Ansaar*) got together and said to ourselves, 'When are we going to stop the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, from being chased around in the mountains of Makkah and from being frightened?' So, seventy men from among us went to meet him during *Hajj* season. We agreed to meet him at the valley of 'Aqabah. At the appointed time, we went to join him one by one or in a group of two men at a time until we were all gathered around him. We told him, 'Messenger of Allah, we want to swear allegiance to you.' He said,

" تُبايِعُونِي عَلَى السَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ فِي النَّشاطِ وَالْكَسَلِ، وَالنَّفَقَةِ فِي الْعُسْرِ وَالْيُسْرِ وَعَلَى الْأَمْرِ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا فِي اللهِ لَا تَخافُونَ فِي اللهِ لَوْمَةَ لائِمٍ وعَلَى أَنْ تَنْصُرُونِي فَتَمْنَعُونِي إِذا قدِمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِمَّا تَمْنَعُونَ مِنْهُ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَزْواجَكُمْ وَأَبْناءَكُمْ وَلَكُمُ الْجَنَّةُ"

'Pledge allegiance to me that you shall listen to me and obey me in pleasure and displeasure; that you will spent (your wealth in Allah's cause) in adversity and prosperity; that you shall promote the virtue and prevent the vice; that you shall convey Allah's word without fearing the censuring of a censurer; and that you shall help and protect me against that which you protect your own selves, your wives and your children and you will have Paradise as reward for that.'

We stood up and swore allegiance to him. As'ad ibn Zurarah – who was one of the youngest of those who were present – held the Prophet's hand and said, 'Wait a minute, O people of Yathrib!(1) Indeed, we have not undertaken a journey here had we not known that he is the Messenger of Allah. Taking him out today means disagreeing with the Arabs and this could lead to the killing of eminent personalities among you. Therefore, you should decide whether to bear that with patience while you get your reward for that from Allah or you become a coward people fearing for your own necks only. You should explain which choice you are making for such would be an excuse for you before Allah.' The *Ansaar* said in response, 'O Sa'd, by Allah, we are never going to abandon this allegiance and we are never going to withdraw it!' It was then that we stood up and swore allegiance

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(1) Yathrib was the name for which the city of Madinah was known before the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, migrated there.

and the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, made stipulations, promising us Paradise in exchange for fulfillment of those stipulations." (1)

That is how the impact of the Muslims' belief in Paradise manifests in the life of this world. After this allegiance – which is regarded as the greatest allegiance in human history – had been concluded and after some ten odd years, an Islamic state grew up, and the authority of that state stretched from the east to the west and from the north to the south, and two superpowers of those age, the Roman and Persian empires bowed to it.

Among the impacts of belief in Paradise is that it makes a Muslim sacrifice his life and wealth to please Allah. You find him competing with his father and his son in sacrificing his life in the cause of Allah.

An example of this is the case of Sa'd bin Khithamah – may Allah be pleased with him. When the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was mobilizing Muslims for the Battle of Badr. The people were hurriedly signing up. Khaithamah told his son Sa'd, "Let me go out and join the army and you stay with the women of the family." The son refused and said, "Had it been for other things beside the Paradise, I would give you preference over myself." To put this disagreement to rest, hey both drew a lot and the son won. So he was the one who joined the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, in the Battle of Badr.(2)

Another example was that of the elderly 'Amr bin al-Jamuh.(3)

---

(1) Recorded by Imaam Ahmad

(2) Sa'd was martyred during the Battle of Badr. When the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, came to Madinah he gave people audience in Sa'd's house .See: *Usdul-Ghabah* 2/346

(3) He was an *Ansaari* leader and was martyred in the Battle of Uhud. He and 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn Haram – Jabir's father – were buried in the same grave. They were sincere in-laws.

He was very old and lame. When the people were being mobilized for the Battle of Uhud, his sons wanted to prevent him from signing up because he was among the excused due to lameness. But he refused saying, “By Allah, I want to walk with my lame legs in Paradise.” He was martyred in that battle. May Allah be pleased with him and please him.(1)

Here is the family of Yasir.(2) They were made to taste severest persecution and suffer the bitterest punishment simply for declaring their faith in their true Creator. They bore all these sufferings in patience though the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, did not promise them any of the materials of this world; he only promised them Paradise. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, would pass by them while they were being persecuted and tormented and – being unable to render them any physical succor – would say to them,

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(1) See: *Siyar A'laam An-Nubala'* 1/253

(2) This family consists of Yasir and Sumayyah and their son Ammaar – may Allah be pleased with all of them. They are among the earliest Muslims. Yasir is ibn ‘Amir al-Anasi, an ally of Banu Makhzum. His nickname is Abu ‘Ammar. He came from Yemen and adopted Abu Hudhayfah ibn Al-Mughirah Al-Makhzumi as an ally. The latter married to him a female slave of his known as Sumayyah had ‘Ammar for Yasir. See: *Usdul-Ghabah* 5/467. Sumayyah was the daughter of Khabbat – may Allah be pleased with her. She was one of the earliest Muslims for she was the 17th person to embrace Islam. Members of the clan of Banu Mughirah persecuted her because of her Islam. It was Abu Jahl who struck her to death with a spear thereby making her the first martyr in Islam – may Allah be pleased with her . See: *Usdul-Ghabah* 7/152.
Their son ‘Ammar, may Allah be pleased with him, migrated to Madinah and witnessed all the battles with the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. He also participated in the Battle of Yamamah in which one of his ears was cut off. He was with ‘Ali and fought the Battles of the Camel and Siffin on his side. He was killed a martyr in the year 37 A.H. in his nineties. See: *Usdul-Ghabah* 4/129

” اصْبِرُوا آل يَاسِرٍ مَوْعِدُكُمُ الْجَنَّةُ “

“Be patient, O the household of Yasir for Paradise is your promised abode!”(1)

This promise of Paradise was a curing balsam for them and its sweetness overwhelmed the pain of persecution.

Paradise had a great impact in nurturing the Muslim armies upon steadfastness, patience and resilience in most difficult moments. In the Battle of Uhud, a rumor was being spread that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, had been killed. Anas bin Nadr (2), may Allah be pleased with him, passed by a group of the Companions and asked them, “Why are you sitting down?” They answered, “The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, had been killed!” He retorted, “Then what is the purpose of your remaining alive?! Get up and die upon what the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, died upon!”(3)

He also said, “O Allah, I am seeking excuse from you for what these people (meaning his Companions) had done and I am denouncing what these people (meaning the polytheists) had done.” He then proceeded until he met Sa‘d ibn Mu‘adh to whom he said, “Sa‘d ibn Mu‘adh, I swear by the Lord of Nadr, I can smell the fragrance of Paradise beyond Uhud Mountain!” Sa‘d completed the story, “I was unable to accomplish what Anas had accomplished.”

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(1) Recorded by Al-Haakim 3/388-389

(2) He is Anas bin An-Nadr ibn Damdam Al-Ansaari Al-Khazraji, uncle of *Anas bin* Malik the Prophet's servant. He participated in the Battle of Uhud along with the Muslims and he was martyred there. May Allah be pleased with him.

(3) See: *Siffah as-Safwah* 1/623

Anas bin Malik[1], may Allah be pleased with him, said about his uncle, "We later found him dead and we found on his body eighty odd marks of sword, spear or arrow; and the polytheists had also mutilated him so much so that it was only his sister who could identify him through his fingers."[2]

It was Anas' belief in Paradise – during this most difficult situation – that kept him firm and steadfast that he was able to smell it while he was still in this world.

There are many other examples on Muslims' great belief in Paradise and the impact of that belief on their life.

You can see the fighters in the way of Allah equipping themselves with the little they could and then advancing towards the enemy, selling their lives cheap in the cause of Allah and fighting the enemies of their religion. In the eyes of these noble men, forces of this world mean nothing. They have no fear for aircraft carriers, attack ships, rocket launchers, and weapons of destruction or armored tanks! What is it that makes these things insignificant in their estimation?! It is Allah's statement:

﴿فَمَن زُحْزِحَ عَنِ ٱلنَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۗ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَـٰعُ ٱلْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾﴾

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[1] *Anas bin* Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, was the Prophet's servant. His nickname is Abu Hamzah. His mother is Umm Sulaim bint Malhan. He was one the Companions with greatest number of narrations from the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, supplicated for him to endow him with much wealth and many children. The supplication was answered and he had eighty sons and daughters. He participated in all the battles with the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. He later moved to Basrah where he died. He was the last of the Prophet's Companions to die there. That was in the year 91 A.H. He lived for more than a hundred years. See: *Usdul-Ghabah* 1/151

[2] *Sahih Al-Bukhari* 3/305

"And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing)." (Aal 'Imraan 3:185)

The blissful Paradise is only attained through Allah's mercy and favor. Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that that Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

" لَنْ يُدْخِلَ أَحَدًا عَمَلُهُ الْجَنَّةَ "

"The good deeds of any person will not make him enter Paradise." (i.e. none can enter Paradise through his good deeds.) They (the Prophet's Companions) said, 'Not even you, O Allah's Messenger?' He said,

" وَلَا أَنَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَتَغَمَّدَنِيَ اللهُ بِفَضْلٍ وَرَحْمَةٍ "

"Not even myself, unless Allah bestows His favor and mercy on me." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

It is a manifestation of Allah's mercy upon His servant to make him succeed in doing righteous deeds and to guide him to pious acts. A servant's good deed is not enough to make him enter Paradise if Allah has not bestowed His blessing on him. His deeds, even if done according to the way that Allah loves and is pleased with, are not equal to the blessings that Allah bestows on him in this world. In fact, if his deeds and Allah's blessings that he enjoys in this world are to be compared, the entire good deeds would be comparable to only a tiny fraction of these blessings; and no amount of gratitude from his part would compensate for the rest of the blessings. If, in this situation, Allah chose to punish the servant, such a punishment would be in place and not be regarded as injustice; and if He chose to bless him, such blessing would far outweigh his good deeds.[1] The Messenger of Allah, said,

”لَوْ أَنَّ اللهَ عَذَّبَ أَهْلَ سَمَوَاتِهِ وَأَهْلَ أَرْضِهِ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ وَهُوَ غَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ لَهُمْ،
وَلَوْ رَحِمَهُمْ لَكَانَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ“

"If Allah were to punish the inhabitants of His heavens and earth, He would do so without His being accused of any injustice to them; and if He were to bless them, His blessing would be far greater than their own deeds." (Recorded by Ibn Majah)

Does Paradise presently exist?

The opinion of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* is that Paradise presently exists. They have many proofs for this. Some of these are as follows:

1. The bargain between the Lord of Honor and Majesty and His believing servants

Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةَ ۚ
يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ ۖ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِى
ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَٱلْإِنجِيلِ وَٱلْقُرْءَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِۦ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ فَٱسْتَبْشِرُوا۟
بِبَيْعِكُمُ ٱلَّذِى بَايَعْتُم بِهِۦ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ (١١١)﴾

"Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah's Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:111)

The above noble verse indicates that there is a bargain in which the purchaser is Allah, Lord of Glory and Majesty and the sellers are the believers and the commodity is lives and properties and the price is the blissful Paradise. Is it then logical that Allah would make a bargain with His servants on an inexistent price?[1]

2. Allah's good tiding to the believers

Allah gave good tidings of Paradise to His believing servants in many verses of the Glorious Qur'an some of which are:

﴿وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ﴾

"And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)." (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ (٢٠) يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُم بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَرِضْوَٰنٍ
وَجَنَّٰتٍ لَّهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ (٢١)﴾

"Those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of Mercy from Him, and His being pleased (with them), and of Gardens (Paradise) for them wherein are everlasting delights." (At-Tawbah 9:20,21)

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[1] See: *Miftah Dar as-Sa'adah* by Ibn Al-Qayyim

[1] See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 14/498 and *Hadil-Arwah* p119

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا
تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

"Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah (Alone)," and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!" (Fussilat 41:30)

These and other verses clearly indicate Allah's glad tidings for His servants that He would make them enter Paradise. Is it then reasonable that Allah would give His servants glad tidings of something that is not existent?

3. The Prophet's visit to Paradise and his informing his *Ummah* about what he saw there

This is one of the clearest proofs on the existence of Paradise. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, had visited Paradise and entered it in a state of wakefulness when he was taken on the night journey to the heavens. He informed his followers about what he saw there.

Allah says in this regard:

﴿سُبْحَـٰنَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِۦ لَيْلًا مِّنَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ إِلَى ٱلْمَسْجِدِ
ٱلْأَقْصَا ٱلَّذِى بَـٰرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُۥ لِنُرِيَهُۥ مِنْ ءَايَـٰتِنَآ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١﴾﴾

"Glorified (and Exalted) is He (Allah) (above all that (evil) they associate with Him) Who took His slave (Muhammad ﷺ) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah) to the farthest mosque (in Jerusalem), the neighborhood whereof We have blessed, in order that We might show him (Muhammad) of Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.). Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer." (Al-Israa' 17:1)

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٥﴾ إِذْ
يَغْشَى ٱلسِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾ مَا زَاغَ ٱلْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾ لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ ءَايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِ
ٱلْكُبْرَىٰٓ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

"And indeed he [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him] saw him [Jibreel (Gabriel)] at a second descent (i.e. another time) near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass). Near it is the Paradise of Abode. When that covered the lote-tree which did cover it! The sight [of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] turned not aside (right or left), nor it transgressed beyond the limit (ordained for it). Indeed he [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] did see of the Greatest Signs, of his Lord (Allah)." (An-Najm 53:13-18)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated the story of *Israa'* and *Mi'raj* from the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. Part of the narrations goes thus:

"ثُمَّ انْطَلَقَ بِي حَتَّى انْتَهَى بِي إِلَى سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَى وَغَشِيَهَا أَلْوَانٌ مَا أَدْرِي
مَا هِيَ، ثُمَّ أُدْخِلْتُ الْـجَنَّةَ فَإِذَا فِيهَا حَبَايِلُ اللُّؤْلُؤِ، وَإِذَا تُرَابُهَا الْمِسْكُ"

"Then Gabriel took me till we reached *Sidratul-Muntaha* (Lote Tree of the utmost boundary) which was shrouded in colors, indescribable. Then I was admitted into Paradise where I found small (tents or) walls (made) of pearls and its earth was of musk."

4. Adam's stay in Paradise:

One of the clearest proofs on existence of Paradise is that Allah, High and Exalted, made Adam and his wife, peace be upon them – to live in the everlasting Paradise. This is the opinion that the righteous predecessors and the generality of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* are upon.(1) It is that upon which the human mind is inclined. It is the opinion that is glaringly clear to the ordinary people.(2)

Allah says:

﴿ وَقُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٣٥ ﴾

"And We said: "O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zaalimoon (wrong-doers)." (Al-Baqarah 2:35)

He also says:

﴿ وَيَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ١٩ ﴾

"And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat thereof as you both wish, but approach not this tree otherwise you both will be of the Zaalimoon (unjust and wrong-doers)." (Al-A'raf 7:19)

However, there are two groups who believe that Paradise has not been created and that it would only be created on the Day of Resurrection.(3) The holders of this mistaken opinion contradict the clear texts of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and the belief of the Companions of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and that of their successors and those who came after them of the rest of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*.(4)

It also contradicts what is known by necessity from the Prophets

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(1) See: *Majmu' al-Fatawa* by Ibn Taymiyyah 4/347
(2) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p51
(3) See: *Al-Fasl fil-Milal wan-Nihal* by Ibn Hazm 3/114
(4) See: *Maqalatul-Islamiyyin* by Abul-Hasan Al-Ash'ari 1/349

from the first to the last of them. For, all of them invited their peoples to believe in Paradise and informed them about the same. The two groups who deny that Paradise presently exists are the Qadariyyah(1) and the Mu'tazilah.(2)

They have argued – in support of this inglorious view of theirs – that had Paradise been presently existent, it would be useless for it would remain idle and uninhabited for a long time. They added that if a king were to build a house and put therein different types of food and drinks and various kinds of facilities without filling it with dwellers his action would be deemed unwise.

They were led into this argument by their vicious doctrine based upon their belief that Allah must do such and such and that He must not do such and such. They thereby equaled the Creator with His creation as far as actions are concerned. They likened Allah to His creatures in His deeds and denied His exclusive attributes. Allah is far above what they attribute to Him! He is the Lord of Glory and Majesty and He should never be compared to His creation neither must His actions be compared to those of His creation. He says about Himself:

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(1) The Qadariyyah are those who deny divine pre-decree. The first person to proclaim this erroneous belief was a man from Iraq known as Sawsan. He was a Christian. He converted to Islam and then apostatized. Ma'bad Al-Juhani took this opinion from him; and Ibn Ghusailan ad-Dimashqi took it from Ma'bad. This opinion surfaced at the twilight of the generation of the Companions – may Allah be pleased with them. Those from among the Companions who denounced the Qadariyyah are: 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Jabir, Ibn 'Abbaas and their peers. They commanded their followers not salute the Qadariyyah, perform funeral prayer on their dead or visit their sick. See: *Ash-Shari'ah* by al-Ajuri p243; Majmu' Al-Fatawa 3/111; *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* by Ibn Abul-'Izz p592; *Fathul-Bari* 1/118 and *Ma'rij Al-Qabul* by al-Hakami 1/274

(2) Al-Mu'tazilah are those who introduced speculative dogmatism into Islam. They are followers of Wasil ibn 'Ata Al-Ghazal and 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd. They are named Mu'tazilah because of their withdrawal from Al-Hasan Al-Basri – may Allah have mercy upon him – when he sent them away at the beginning of the second century of *Hijrah*. See: *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin* 1/235; *Al-Milal wan-Nihal* by Shahrastani 1/54; *Majmu al-Fataawa* 13/357; and *Sharh Al-'Aqidah Al-Tahawiyyah* by Ibn Abul-'Izz p588.

﴿لَيۡسَ كَمِثۡلِهِۦ شَيۡءٞۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلۡبَصِيرُ ١١﴾

"There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer." (Ash-Shura 42:11)

They also argued that if it was agreed that Paradise was presently existent, it would be inevitable for it not be extinct on the Day of Resurrection due to Allah's statement,

﴿كُلُّ شَيۡءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجۡهَهُۥۚ﴾

"Everything will perish save His Face." (Al-Qasas 28:88)

This is indeed a very weak argument. They did not understand the meaning of the verse. What is meant by 'everything' is: everything upon which perish and finiteness had been decreed. As for Paradise and its bliss such as the *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn*, Allah has created them for everlasting existence. Any contrary opinion is wrong and whoever holds it is heretic and has gone astray.[1]

In their futile attempt to prove that Paradise was not yet created, they cited the Prophet's statement,

”مَنْ قَالَ :سُبْحَانَ اللهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ غُرِسَتْ لَهُ نَخْلَةٌ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ“

"Whoever says, *'subhanallahil-'Azeem wabihamdih'*, Allah would plant a palm tree for him in Paradise." And his statement,

”أَنَّ الْـجَنَّةَ طَيِّبَةُ التُّرْبَةِ عَذْبَةُ الْمَاءِ وَأَنَّهَا قِيعَانٌ وَأَنَّ غِرَاسَهَا
سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَالْحَمْدُ للهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ“

"Indeed, the soil of Paradise is beautiful and its water is sweet. It is a lowland and its plants will be *'Subhanallah wal-Hamdulillaah wa laa ilaaha illallah wa Allahu akbar'.*"

They argued that if Paradise had been created then the planting would be meaningless and it would not be a lowland.

They also cited Allah's statement in which He informed us of the supplication made by the wife of Pharaoh, *"My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Paradise."* (At-Tahreem 66:11) With this verse, they argued that it would be impossible for a person to tell someone who has already woven a garment for him or built a house for him, 'weave a garment for me or built a house for me'.

Another of their proofs is the Prophet's statement,

”مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا للهِ تَعَالَى بَنَى اللهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْـجَنَّةِ“

"Whoever builds a mosque for Allah, Allah will build a house for him in Paradise." (Recorded by Muslim) They argued that this statement is a conditional sentence just like another statement of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,,

”مَنْ صَلَّى اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً فِي يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ بُنِيَ لَهُ بِهِنَّ بَيْتٌ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ“

"Whoever performs twelve supererogatory *Rak'ahs* during the day and night, Allah will build a house for him in Paradise." (Recorded by At-Tirmidhi)

Response to these arguments:

If they meant that Paradise has not yet been created at all and that it is absolutely inexistent in the present, then their claim is false; for facts from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* repudiate it. Such a claim also contradicts what is known in religion by necessity. If they meant that Paradise had not been completely created then this is an incontestable truth.

As for the proofs they mention, what those proofs indicate is that the land of Paradise has already been created and that it presently exists. As for remembrance of Allah mentioned in the *Hadith*, Allah will create a plant in the land of Paradise. The same applies for building of houses for those who perform the righteous deeds mentioned in the *Hadiths*. The more a servant performs righteous deeds, the more Allah expands for him his place in Paradise.(1)

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[1] See: *Hadial-Arwah* p78-80

Qadi Mundhir ibn Sa'eed said: "The Paradise in which Adam lived was not the eternal Paradise. He supported this view with the following arguments:

One: Had it been the everlasting Paradise, Adam would not have eaten from the forbidden tree in order to have eternal life. Also, Satan had lied in that Paradise while there will be no lying in the eternal Paradise. Equally, whoever is admitted to the eternal Paradise will never be expelled from it. He would rather abide therein forever, while Adam and Eve, peace be upon them – were sent out of it.

Ibn Hazm has refuted all these arguments with the following statement:

"There is no proof in all this. It is known that Adam's belief that he would have eternal life by eating from the forbidden tree was incorrect; it was only a wrong assumption on his part. Therefore, an action that was based on a wrong assumption could not be cited as a proof. This is in addition to the fact that Allah did not inform Adam that he would live forever in Paradise because He – High and Exalted – had prior knowledge that He would expel him from there."(2)

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah clearly mentioned that the Paradise in which Adam lived was the eternal Paradise. He said: "Whoever says that it was a Paradise in the land of India or any other place on the earth is indeed among the apostates or the heretics. For, this is the claim of the philosophists and

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(1) See: *Al-Fasl fil-Milal wal-Ahwa wan-Nihal* 3/84 and *Hadi Al-Arwah* p78

(2) See: *Al-Fasl fil-Milal* 3/4/12

the Mu'tazilites; and the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* repudiate this claim."(1)

Therefore, the correct and the preponderant opinion is that it was in the eternal Paradise that Prophet Adam and his wife, peace be upon them – lived. This opinion is supported by the following proofs:

1. The word 'Paradise' is mentioned in the Qur'an affixed by the article (*alif* and *laam*) which indicate definiteness. Allah says:

﴿وَقُلۡنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسۡكُنۡ أَنتَ وَزَوۡجُكَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ﴾

"And We said: O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise." (Al-Baqarah 2:35)

﴿وَيَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسۡكُنۡ أَنتَ وَزَوۡجُكَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ﴾

"And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise." (Al-A'raaf 7:19)

And there is no known Paradise except the everlasting Paradise. It has become a proper name whereby whenever the word *'Al-Jannah'* is mentioned; it is naturally understood to be the Paradise that the believers have in mind. Whenever the word is intended for something else, it is mentioned in an indefinite form or qualified with another word or explained by the context.(2) Examples of this are the following statements of Allah:

﴿جَنَّتَيۡنِ مِنۡ أَعۡنَٰبٖ﴾

"two gardens of grapes." (Al-Kahf 18:32)

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(1) See: *Majmu al-Fataawa* 4/347

(2) Therefore, whenever it is mentioned in any of these contexts, it is normally translated as 'garden' and not 'Paradise' as it is clearly observed in the verses.

﴿ وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ ﴾

"It was better for you to say, when you entered your garden:" (Al-Kahf 18:39)

﴿ إِنَّا بَلَوْنَٰهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ﴾

"Verily, We have tried them as We tried the people of the garden." (Al-Qalam 68:17)

2. Allah describes the Paradise in which Adam lived with descriptions that could only be those of the everlasting Paradise. Allah says:

﴿ إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَىٰ ﴿١١٨﴾ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تَضْحَىٰ ﴿١١٩﴾ ﴾

"Verily, you have (a promise from Us) that you will never be hungry therein nor naked. And you (will) suffer not from thirst therein nor from the sun's heat." (Ta Ha 20:118-119)

It could obviously be seen that the matters mentioned in the above two verses are signs that are only found in this worldly life. No human being can escape being afflicted by some – if not all of them – while he is still in this world, even if he enjoys the best and the most pleasant positions in this world.[1]

3. Allah says:

﴿ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَٱسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَقُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَأَزَلَّهُمَا ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p57

"And (remember) when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves before Adam." And they prostrated except Iblîs (Satan), he refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allah). And We said: "O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zaalimoon (wrong-doers)." Then the Shaitaan (Satan) made them slip therefrom (the Paradise), and got them out from that in which they were. We said: "Get you down, all, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be a dwelling place for you and an enjoyment for a time." (Al-Baqarah 2:34-36)

In the above verses, Allah explains that He commanded them (the humans) to get down to the earth, that there would be enmity between them and that they were not initially in the earth; and that it was later that they were commanded to get down there. For, if they had been in the earth before and they then moved from a land to another like the movement of Prophet Moosaa's people from one land to another, their dwelling and their enjoyment for a time would have been in the earth before and after their getting down.[1]

4. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"حَاجَّ مُوسَى آدَمَ فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَنْتَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجْتَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ بِذَنْبِكَ وَأَشْقَيْتَهُمْ، قَالَ: قَالَ آدَمُ : يَا مُوسَى أَنْتَ الَّذِي اصْطَفَاكَ اللهُ بِرِسَالَتِهِ وَبِكَلَامِهِ، أَتَلُومُنِي عَلَى أَمْرٍ كَتَبَهُ اللهُ عَلَيَّ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَنِي، أَوْ قَدَّرَهُ عَلَيَّ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَنِي" قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "فَحَجَّ آدَمُ مُوسَى"

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(1) See: *Majmu al-Fataawa* by Ibn Taymiyyah 4/347

"Adam and Moses met, and Moses said to Adam, 'You are the one who made people miserable and turned them out of Paradise. Adam said to him, 'You are the one whom Allah selected for His message and whom He selected for Himself and upon whom He revealed the Torah.' Moses said, 'Yes.' Adam said, 'Did you find that written in my fate before my creation?' Moses said, 'Yes.' So Adam overcame Moses with this argument."

The essence of this *Hadith* is that Moses, peace be upon him – blamed Adam, peace be upon him – for being the cause of his progeny's removal from the eternal abode of bliss to the abode of misery and hardship. (This indicates that Adam lived in the eternal Paradise).(1)

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: "Adam, peace be upon him – supported his argument with Moses with the fact that man is commanded to bear whatever Allah has written down for him of hardships and calamities with patience, to return to Him in repentance and to seek His forgiveness from all sins. And Allah knows best."(2)

5. Imaam Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"يَجْمَعُ اللهُ تبارَكَ وَتَعَالَى النَّاسَ، فَيَقُومُ الْـمُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى تُزْلَفَ لَـهُمُ الْـجَنَّةُ فَيَأْتُونَ آدَمَ فَيَقُولُونَ: يا أَبَانَا اسْتَفْتِحْ لنَا الْـجَنَّةَ. فَيَقُولُ: وَهَلْ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنَ الْـجَنَّةِ إِلَّا خَطِيئَةُ أَبِيكُمْ ...."

"Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, would gather people. The believers would stand till the Paradise would be brought near them. They would come to Adam and say: O our father, open for us the Paradise. He would say: What turned you out from the Paradise was the sin of your father?"

This *Hadith* indicates that the Paradise in which Adam lived was the eternal Paradise which mankind would seek its opening on the Day of Resurrection and which they would seek to enter on that day.(1)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p56

(2) *Majmu al-Fataawa* 4/349

(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p56

Allah says:

﴿وَسَارِعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَجَنَّةٍ
عَرۡضُهَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ أُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ ١٣٣﴾

And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious." (Aal 'Imraan 3:133)

He also says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ ٱشۡتَرَىٰ مِنَ ٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمۡ وَأَمۡوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ
ٱلۡجَنَّةَۚ يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَيَقۡتُلُونَ وَيُقۡتَلُونَۖ وَعۡدًا عَلَيۡهِ حَقّٗا
فِي ٱلتَّوۡرَىٰةِ وَٱلۡإِنجِيلِ وَٱلۡقُرۡءَانِۚ وَمَنۡ أَوۡفَىٰ بِعَهۡدِهِۦ مِنَ ٱللَّهِۚ
فَٱسۡتَبۡشِرُواْ بِبَيۡعِكُمُ ٱلَّذِي بَايَعۡتُم بِهِۦۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ١١١﴾

"Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah's Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Tauraat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:111)

Chapter One
Description of Paradise

Paradise *(Al-Jannah)*

This is the name that is mostly frequently mentioned in the glorious Qur'an to indicate the abode of bliss in the Hereafter. In the Qur'an, it is sometimes mentioned in definite or indefinite forms; it is also mentioned in singular or plural forms. Examples of this abound in the Qur'an. Some of these can be observed in the following verses:

﴿وَقُلۡنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ ٱسۡكُنۡ أَنتَ وَزَوۡجُكَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنۡهَا رَغَدًا حَيۡثُ شِئۡتُمَا وَلَا
تَقۡرَبَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٣٥﴾

"And We said: "O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zaalimoon (wrong-doers)." (Al-Baqarah 2:35)

﴿أَمۡ حَسِبۡتُمۡ أَن تَدۡخُلُواْ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأۡتِكُم مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ خَلَوۡاْ مِن قَبۡلِكُمۖ
مَّسَّتۡهُمُ ٱلۡبَأۡسَآءُ وَٱلضَّرَّآءُ وَزُلۡزِلُواْ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ ٱلرَّسُولُ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مَعَهُۥ مَتَىٰ نَصۡرُ
ٱللَّهِۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ نَصۡرَ ٱللَّهِ قَرِيبٞ ٢١٤﴾

"Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, "When (will come) the Help of Allah?" Yes! Certainly, the Help of Allah is near!" (Al-Baqarah 2:214)

﴿وَلَا تَنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكَٰتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَّ ۚ وَلَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَلَوْ
أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۗ وَلَا تُنكِحُوا۟ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا۟ ۚ وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن مُّشْرِكٍ
وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكُمْ ۗ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلنَّارِ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَٱلْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۖ
وَيُبَيِّنُ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢١﴾

"And do not marry Al-Mushrikaat (idolatresses) till they believe (worship Allah Alone). And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) Mushrikah (idolatress), even though she pleases you. And give not (your daughters) in marriage to Al-Mushrikoon till they believe (in Allah Alone) and verily, a believing slave is better than a (free) Mushrik (idolater), even though he pleases you. Those (Al-Mushrikoon) invite you to the Fire, but Allah invites (you) to Paradise and Forgiveness by His Leave, and makes His Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations) clear to mankind that they may remember." (Al-Baqarah 2:221)

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِ ۗ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ ۖ فَمَن
زُحْزِحَ عَنِ ٱلنَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۗ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَٰعُ
ٱلْغُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾

"Everyone shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away

from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing)." (Aal 'Imraan 3:185)

﴿وَمَن يَعْمَلْ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ مِن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾

"And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a (true) believer (in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim)) such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a speck on the back of a date-stone, will be done to them." (An-Nisaa' 4:124)

﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَقَالَ ٱلْمَسِيحُ
يَٰبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبَّكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُۥ مَن يُشْرِكْ بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ ٱللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَىٰهُ ٱلنَّارُ ۖ وَمَا لِلظَّٰلِمِينَ مِنْ أَنصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾

"Surely, they have disbelieved who say: "Allah is the Messiah ['Isaa (Jesus)] son of Maryam (Mary)." But the Messiah ['Isaa (Jesus)) said: "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord." Verily, whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers) there are no helpers." (Al-Ma'idah 5:72)

﴿يَٰبَنِىٓ ءَادَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ كَمَآ أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُم مِّنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ يَنزِعُ عَنْهُمَا
لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتِهِمَآ ۗ إِنَّهُۥ يَرَىٰكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُۥ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا
ٱلشَّيَٰطِينَ أَوْلِيَآءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

"O Children of Adam! Let not Shaitaan (Satan) deceive you, as he got your parents [Adam and Hawwa' (Eve)] out of Paradise, stripping them of their raiments, to show them their private parts.

Verily, he and Qabeeluhu (his soldiers from the jinn or his tribe) see you from where you cannot see them. Verily, We made the Shayaateen (devils) Auliya' (protectors and helpers) for those who believe not." (Al-A'raaf 7:27)

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِى
هَدَىٰنَا لِهَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِىَ لَوْلَا أَنْ هَدَىٰنَا اللَّهُ ۖ لَقَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ ۖ وَنُودُوا
أَن تِلْكُمُ الْجَنَّةُ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾﴾

"And We shall remove from their breasts any (mutual) hatred or sense of injury (which they had, if at all, in the life of this world); rivers flowing under them, and they will say: ' All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has guided us to this, and never could we have found guidance, were it not that Allah had guided us! Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth.' And it will be cried out to them: 'This is the Paradise which you have inherited for what you used to do.' " (Al-A'raf 7:43)

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَٰلَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ
يُقَٰتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ ۖ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِى
التَّوْرَىٰةِ وَالْإِنجِيلِ وَالْقُرْءَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِۦ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا
بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِى بَايَعْتُم بِهِۦ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١١﴾﴾

"Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah's Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Tauraat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:111)

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ ۚ أُولَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ
الْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

"For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah (glorified and exalted be He). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, they will abide therein forever." (Yunus 10:26)

﴿سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ
الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢١﴾﴾

"Race with one another in hastening towards forgiveness from your Lord (Allah), and Paradise the width whereof is as the width of the heaven and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows on whom He is pleased with. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty." (Al-Hadeed 57:21)

﴿وَجَزَىٰهُم بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾﴾

"And their recompense shall be Paradise, and silken garments, because they were patient." (Al-Insaan 76:12)

In all the above verses, it is the abode of bliss in the Hereafter that is meant by Paradise.

There is one verse in the Qur'an in which the word 'eternity' is added to the word 'Paradise'. It is Allah's statement:

﴿قُلْ أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ ٱلْخُلْدِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۚ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَزَآءً وَمَصِيرًا﴾

"Say: [O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)] 'Is that (torment) better or the Paradise of Eternity which is promised to the Muttaqoon (the pious and righteous persons)?' It will be theirs as a reward and as a final destination." (Al-Furqaan 25:15)

There are also verses in which the word 'Paradise' is qualified with the word 'Delightful'. Examples of this are Allah's statements:

﴿وَٱجْعَلْنِى مِن وَرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٨٥﴾﴾

"And make me one of the inheritors of the Paradise of Delight." (Ash-Shu'ara 26:85)

﴿فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتُ نَعِيمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾﴾

"(There is for him) rest and provision, and a Garden of Delights (Paradise)." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:89)

Equally, there are verses in the Qur'an in which Paradise is mentioned in plural form. Examples of this are as follows:

﴿تَرَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا۟ وَهُوَ وَاقِعٌۢ بِهِمْ ۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فِى رَوْضَاتِ ٱلْجَنَّاتِ ۖ لَهُم مَّا يَشَآءُونَ عِندَ
رَبِّهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَضْلُ ٱلْكَبِيرُ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

"You will see (on the Day of Resurrection), the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers) fearful of that which they have earned, and it (Allah's Torment) will surely befall them. But those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds (will be) in the flowering meadows of the Gardens (Paradise). They shall have whatsoever they desire with their Lord. That is the supreme Grace, (Paradise)." (Ash-Shura 42:22)

﴿وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى رُزِقْنَا مِن قَبْلُ ۖ
وَأُتُوا۟ بِهِۦ مُتَشَٰبِهًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَآ أَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾

"And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say: 'This is what we were provided with before,' and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste) and they shall have therein Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives) and they will abide therein forever." (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

﴿قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُم بِخَيْرٍ مِّن ذَٰلِكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"Say: 'Shall I inform you of things far better than those? For Al-Muttaqoon (the pious - see V.2:2) there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home) and Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives). And Allah will be pleased with them. And Allah is All-Seer of the (His) slaves'." (Aal 'Imraan 3:15)

﴿فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّى لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَٰمِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ
بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ فَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَأُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِى
وَقَٰتَلُوا۟ وَقُتِلُوا۟ لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

"So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), 'Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My Cause, and who fought, and were killed (in My Cause), verily, I will expiate from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards.'" (Aal 'Imraan 3:195)

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا لَّهُمْ فِيهَآ أَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

"But those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do deeds of righteousness, We shall admit them to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), abiding therein forever. Therein they shall have Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives, and We shall admit them to shades wide and ever deepening (Paradise)." (An-Nisaa' 4:57)

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ ٱثْنَىْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا
وَقَالَ ٱللَّهُ إِنِّى مَعَكُمْ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَيْتُمُ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَءَامَنتُم
بِرُسُلِى وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَّأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنكُمْ
سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ فَمَن كَفَرَ
بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾

"Indeed Allah took the covenant from the Children of Israel (Jews), and We appointed twelve leaders among them. And Allah said: 'I am with you if you perform As-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat) and give Zakaat and believe in My Messengers; honor and assist them, and lend a good loan to Allah, verily, I will expiate your sins and admit you to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise). But if any of you after this, disbelieved, he has indeed gone astray from the Straight Path.'" (Al-Ma'idah 5:12)

﴿وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ وَٱلْأَنصَارِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَٰنٍ
رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى تَحْتَهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾

"And the foremost to embrace Islam of the Muhaajiroon (those who migrated from Makkah to Madinah) and the Ansaar (the citizens of Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhaajiroon) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:100)

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا وَلِبَاسُهُمْ
فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

"Truly, Allah will admit those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to Gardens underneath which rivers flow (in Paradise), wherein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls and their garments therein will be of silk." (Al-Hajj 22:23)

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ ٱلْأَنْعَـٰمُ وَٱلنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

"Certainly! Allah will admit those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), while those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as cattle eat; and the Fire will be their abode." (Muhammad 47:12)

﴿يَوْمَ تَرَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَـٰتِ يَسْعَىٰ نُورُهُم بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَـٰنِهِم بُشْرَىٰكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ جَنَّـٰتٌ
تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

"On the Day you shall see the believing men and the believing women: their light running forward before them and by their right hands. Glad tidings for you this Day! Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever! Truly, this is the great success!" (Al-Hadeed 57:12)

﴿لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْـَٔاخِرِ يُوَآدُّونَ مَنْ حَآدَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ
وَلَوْ كَانُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ
كَتَبَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْإِيمَـٰنَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

"You [O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people). For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with Rooh (proofs, light and true guidance) from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens (Paradise) under which rivers flow to dwell therein (forever). Allah is pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the Party of Allah. Verily, it is the Party of Allah that will be the successful." (Al-Mujadilah 58:22)

﴿رَّسُولًا يَتْلُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ ءَايَـٰتِ ٱللَّهِ مُبَيِّنَـٰتٍ لِّيُخْرِجَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ مِنَ
ٱلظُّلُمَـٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِ ۚ وَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَـٰلِحًا يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ قَدْ أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ رِزْقًا ﴿١١﴾﴾

"(And has also sent to you) a Messenger [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] who recites to you the Verses of Allah (the Qur'an) containing clear explanations, that He may take out those who believe and do righteous good deeds from the darkness (of polytheism and disbelief) to the light (of Monotheism). And whosoever believes in Allah and performs righteous good deeds, He will admit him into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. Allah has indeed granted for him an excellent provision." (At-Talaaq 65:11)

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ
سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّـٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِى ٱللَّهُ
ٱلنَّبِىَّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ ۖ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَـٰنِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ
أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾﴾

"O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise) - the Day that Allah will not disgrace the Prophet [Muhammad (blessings and peace of

Allah be upon him)] and those who believe with him. Their Light will run forward before them and (with their Records - Books of deeds) in their right hands. They will say: 'Our Lord! Keep perfect our Light for us (and do not put it off till we cross over the Siraat (a slippery bridge over the Hell safely) and grant us forgiveness. Verily, You are Able to do all things.'" (At-Tahreem 66:8)

Paradise has beeb described to in the Qur'ans as 'Gardens of Eden' in eleven verses in the Qur'an. Some of these are as follow:

﴿وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ٧٢﴾

"Allah has promised to the believers - men and women - Gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of 'Adn (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:72)

﴿جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ ٢٣﴾

"'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), which they shall enter and (also) those who acted righteously from among their fathers, and their wives, and their offspring. And angels shall enter unto them from every gate." (Ar-Ra'd 13:23)

﴿أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِّن سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ نِعْمَ ٱلثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ٣١﴾

"These! For them will be 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them; therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafaq (dwelling, resting place.)!" (Al-Kahf 18:31)

It is also annexation to as 'Gardens of al-*Firdaws*' in one verse, which is Allah's statement:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ١٠٧﴾

"Verily those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, shall have the Gardens of Al-Firdaws (the Paradise) for their entertainment." (Al-Kahf 18:107)

The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, has referred to Paradise as '*Firdaws*' in one of his sayings. Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated:

"أُصِيبَ حَارِثَةُ يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ وَهُوَ غُلَامٌ فَجَاءَتْ أُمُّهُ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَتْ: يَا رَسُولَ الله قَدْ عَرَفْتَ مَنْزِلَةَ حَارِثَةَ مِنِّي فَإِنْ يَكُنْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ أَصْبِرْ وَأَحْتَسِبْ، وَإِنْ تَكُنِ الْأُخْرَى تَرَى مَا أَصْنَعُفَقَالَ: وَيْحَكِ أَوَهَبِلْتِ أَوَجَنَّةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ هِيَ إِنَّهَا جِنَانٌ كَثِيرَةٌ وَإِنَّهُ فِي جَنَّةِ الْفِرْدَوْسِ"

"Harithah was martyred on the day (of the battle) of Badr, and he was a young boy then. His mother came to the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and said, 'O Allah's Messenger! You know how dear Harithah is to me. If he is in Paradise, I shall remain patient, and hope for reward from Allah, but if it is not so, then you shall see what I do?' He said, 'May Allah be merciful to you! Have you lost your senses? Do you think there is only one Paradise? There are many Paradises and your son is in the (most superior) Paradise of *Al-Firdaws.'"*

The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, also informed us that '*Firdaws* is the best and the highest part of Paradise. Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

" مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَصَامَ رَمَضَانَ، كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللهِ أَنْ
يُدْخِلَهُ الْـجَنَّةَ ، جَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ أَوْ جَلَسَ فِي أَرْضِهِ الَّتِي وُلِدَ فِيهَا. فَقَالُوا:
يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَفَلَا نُبَشِّرَ النَّاسَ بِذَلِك ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا اللهُ
لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سبيلِ اللهمابَيْنَ الدَّجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ
فَاسْأَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الْـجَنَّةِ وَأَعْلَى الْـجَنَّةِ وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ "

"Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger, offer prayer perfectly and fasts the month of Ramadan, will rightfully be granted Paradise by Allah, no matter whether he fights in Allah's Cause or remains in the land where he is born." The people said, "O Allah's Messenger! Shall we acquaint the people with this good news?" He said, "Paradise has one-hundred grades which Allah has reserved for the *Mujahideen* who fight in His Cause, and the distance between each of two grades is like the distance between the Heaven and the Earth. So, when you ask Allah (for something), ask for Al-*Firdaws* which is the best and highest part of Paradise." (i.e. The sub-narrator added, "I think the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, also said, 'Above it (i.e. *Al-Firdaws*) is the Throne of Beneficent (i.e. Allah), and from it originate the rivers of Paradise.") (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority 'Ubadah bin Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

" فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةُ دَرَجَةٍ ، مَابَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَالفِرْدَوْسُ
أَعْلَاهَا دَرَجَةً ، وَمِنْهَا تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْأَرْبَعَةُ، وَمِنْ فَوْقِهَا يَكُونُ الْعَرْشُ ، فَإِذَا
سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ فَسَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ "

"There are in Paradise a hundred grades; between every two grades is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth. The highest of these grades is *Firdaws*; it is from it that the four rivers of Paradise originate. The Divine Throne shall be on top of it. Therefore, when you ask Allah for Paradise, ask him the *Firdaws*."

It could be summed up from the above narrations that *Firdaws* is used to refer to the entire Paradise as it is also used to describe the highest and the best part thereof. Allah knows best.(1)

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(1) See: Ibn Al-Qayyim's *Hadi Al-Arwah* p132

Paradise's other Names and their Meanings

One: Darus-*Salaam* (Abode of Peace)

This name is mentioned in two verses of the Qur'an to indicate the abode of bliss. The verses are:

﴿لَهُمْ دَارُ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾﴾

"For them will be the home of peace (Paradise) with their Lord. And He will be their Wali (Helper and Protector) because of what they used to do." (Al-An'am 6:127)

﴿وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ دَارِ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾

"Allah calls to the home of peace (i.e. Paradise, by accepting Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism and by doing righteous good deeds and abstaining from polytheism and evil deeds) and guides whom He wills to the Straight Path." (Yunus 10:25)

One: Meaning of Darus-Salam

It is the abode that Allah has prepared for His righteous servants. Indeed, it deserves to be called the abode of peace. For, it is there that real peace and safety are found; it is a place of eternity with no finiteness; it is an abode of wealth with no poverty; it is an abode of Glory with no ignominy; it is an abode of health with no illness; and it is an abode of safety from all anxieties, sorrows, afflictions and imperfections. It is indeed a dwelling of absolute and everlasting peace and eternal safety from death and old age. Therein are delights whose extent is known by Allah alone.

Two: *Al-Husna*

This word is mentioned in the Qur'an in reference to the abode of bliss in the Hereafter. It is mentioned in ten verses, some of which are as follows:

﴿لَّا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْقَٰعِدُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُو۟لِى ٱلضَّرَرِ وَٱلْمُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۚ وَكُلًّا
وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَفَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾﴾

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives above those who sit (at home). Unto each, Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight, above those who sit (at home) by a huge reward." (An-Nisaa' 4:95)

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ
ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

"For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah (glorified and exalted be He). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, they will abide therein forever." (Yunus 10:26)

﴿لِلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَٱلَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لَهُۥ لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُم مَّا
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُۥ مَعَهُۥ لَٱفْتَدَوْا۟ بِهِۦٓ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوٓءُ ٱلْحِسَابِ وَمَأْوَىٰهُمْ
جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ ٱلْمِهَادُ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

"For those who answered their Lord's Call (believed in the

Oneness of Allah and followed His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) i.e. Islamic Monotheism) is Al-Husna (i.e. Paradise). But those who answered not His Call [disbelieved in the Oneness of Allah and followed not His Messenger Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] if they had all that is in the earth together with its like, they would offer it in order to save themselves (from the torment, it will be in vain). For them there will be the terrible reckoning. Their dwelling-place will be Hell; and worst indeed is that place for rest." (Ar-Ra'd 13:18)

﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَٰثُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ لَا يَسْتَوِى مِنكُم مَّنْ
أَنفَقَ مِن قَبْلِ ٱلْفَتْحِ وَقَٰتَلَ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدُ وَقَٰتَلُوا۟ ۚ
وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ١٠﴾

"And what is the matter with you that you spend not in the Cause of Allah? And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquering (of Makkah, with those among you who did so later). Such are higher in degree than those who spent and fought afterwards. But to all Allah has promised Al-Husna (the best reward). And Allah is All-Aware of what you do." (Al-Hadeed 57:10)

According to the opinion of the majority of the scholars, the word *Al-Husna* mentioned in the verses means 'Paradise'. The opinion is supported by the *Hadith* recorded by Muslim and An-Nasai on the authority of Suhayb ibn Sinan Ar-Rumi, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, recited this verse,

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ﴾

'For those who have done good is *Al-Husna* and even more' and then said,

"إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْـجَنَّةَ وَأَهْلُ النَّارِ النَّارَ، نَادَى مُنَادٍ يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ إِنَّ لَكُمْ
عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ مَوْعِدًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُنْجِزَكُمُوهُ قَالُوا: وَمَا هُوَ؟ أَلَمْ يُثَقِّلِ اللهُ مَوَازِينَنَا يُبَيِّضْ
وُجُوهَنَا وَيُدْخِلْنَا الْـجَنَّةَ يُنْجِنَا مِنَ النَّارِ؟ قَالَ: فَيَكْشِفُ الْحِجَابَ فَيَنْظُرُونَ
إِلَيْهِ، فَوَاللهِ مَا أَعْطَاهُمُ اللهُ شيأً أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَيْهِ وَلَا أَقَرَّ لِأَعْيُنِهِمْ"

'When those deserving of Paradise would enter Paradise and those deserving of Hell would enter Hell, an announcer would announce, 'O you people of Paradise, indeed, your Lord wants to fulfil His promise to you.' They would say, 'Has He not made the scales of our good deeds heavy, brightened our faces, made us enter Paradise and saved us from Hell?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, proceeded, 'Then Allah will lift the veil, and of things given to them, nothing would he dearer to them than the sight of their Lord, the Mighty and the Glorious." (This is An-Nasai's version)

In this *Hadith*, the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, recited this verse and then explained its meaning with his statement, 'When those deserving Paradise would enter Paradise', thereby indicating that the righteous would have *Al-Husna*. Therefore, it could be inferred from here that *Al-Husna* is Paradise.

At-Tabari recorded in his *Tafseer* on the authority of Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'ari, may Allah be pleased with him, who reported that he gave a sermon on Basra's pulpit in which said:

"On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will send an angel to the people of Paradise to tell them, 'O dwellers of Paradise, has Allah fulfilled His promise to you?' They will then look at what Allah has blessed them with of ornaments, garments, fruits, rivers and pure women and they will say, 'Yes, Allah has fulfilled His promise to us.' The angel will ask them twice again, 'Has Allah fulfilled his promise to you?' They will look around and will find nothing missing of what they were promised and they will answer again, 'Yes, He has fulfilled all His promises to us.' Then the angel will say, 'There is one thing left for you. Allah says, "For those who have done good is *Al-Husna* and even more." Indeed, *Al-Husna* is Paradise and the 'more' is looking at Allah's Gracious Countenance.'" (1)

It then becomes clear that *Al-Husna* is one of the names of Paradise. May Allah, in His infinite mercy and grace, include us and our Muslim brethren among its dwellers.

Three: *Toobaa*

In the Qur'an the abode of bliss in the Hereafter is referred to as *Tuba* in a verse in *Surah Ar-Ra'd*. Allah says

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمْ وَحُسْنُ مَـَٔابٖ ٢٩﴾

"Those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism), and work righteousness, toobaa (all kinds of happiness or name of a tree in Paradise) is for them and a beautiful place of (final) return." (Ar-Ra'd 13:29)

Toobaa is one of the names of Paradise according to many scholars among whom are Ibn 'Abbaas, 'Ikrimah, Mujahid and others.

If we look into the literal meaning of *toobaa* and its etymological root, we would realize that it indicates anything that is pleasant; and Paradise is the greatest of all pleasant things.

Four: *Firdaws*

In the glorious Qur'an, the word, *'Firdaws'* is mentioned in reference to Paradise once. Allah says:

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(1) *Jaami' Al-Bayan* 7/11/105; this narration is however declared as very weak by Shaykh Ahmad Shakir – may Allah have mercy upon him.

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ ٱلْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ١١﴾

"Who shall inherit the Firdaws (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever." (Al-Mu'minun 23:11)

As mentioned earlier, *Firdaws* is sometimes mentioned in reference to the entire Paradise and it sometimes mentioned in reference to the highest and the best part of it. The proof for the former is the above-mentioned verse while the proof for the latter is the *Hadith* recorded by al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَصَامَ رَمَضَانَ كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ
الْـجَنَّةَ، هَاجَرَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ أَوْ جَلَسَ فِي أَرْضِهِ الَّتِي وُلِدَ فِيهَا قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ
أَفَلَا نُنَبِّئُ النَّاسَ بِذَلِكَ قَالَ: إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا اللهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ
فِي سَبِيلِهِ، كُلُّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ مَابَيْنَهُمَا كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ فَسَلُوهُ
الْفِرْدَوْسَ فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الْـجَنَّةِ وَأَعْلَى الْـجَنَّةَ أَوَ فَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ
أَنْهَارُ الْـجَنَّةِ"

"Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger offers prayers perfectly and fasts (the month of) Ramadan then it is incumbent upon Allah to admit him into Paradise, whether he emigrates for Allah's cause or stays in the land where he was born." They (the Companions of the Prophet) said," O Allah's Messenger! Should we not inform the people of that?" He said, "There are one-hundred degrees in Paradise which Allah has prepared for those who carry on *Jihad* in His Cause. The distance between every two degrees is like the distance between the sky and the Earth, so if you ask Allah for anything, ask Him for the *Firdaws*, for it is the last part of Paradise and the highest part of Paradise, and at its top there is the Throne of Beneficent, and from it gush forth the rivers of Paradise."

Five: Al-*Hayawan*

This word is mentioned as an explanation for the abode of the Hereafter once in the Qur'an in *Surah Al-'Ankabut*. It is Allah's statement:

﴿وَمَا هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَآ إِلَّا لَهۡوٞ وَلَعِبٞۚ وَإِنَّ ٱلدَّارَ ٱلۡأٓخِرَةَ لَهِيَ ٱلۡحَيَوَانُۚ لَوۡ
كَانُواْ يَعۡلَمُونَ ٦٤﴾

"And this life of the world is only amusement and play! Verily, the home of the Hereafter - that is the life indeed (i.e. the eternal life that will never end), if they but knew." (Al-'Ankabut 29:64)

Here, it is Paradise that is meant by *Al-Hayawan*.

Hayawan is a verbal noun which means life and opposite of death. It is also a word used for everything that is alive. Allah calls the abode of the Hereafter *Hayawan* because life there is everlasting and infinite.

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِذَا صَارَ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ إِلَى الْـجَنَّةِ وَأَهْلُ النَّارِ إِلَى النَّارِ جِيءَ بِالْـمَوْتِ، حَتَّى يُجْعَلَ
بَيْنَ الْـجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ ثُمَّ يُذْبَح، ثُمَّ يُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ لَا مَوْتَ. وَيَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ لَا
مَوْتَ. فَيَزْدَادُ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ فَرَحًا إِلَى فَرَحِهِمْ وَيَزْدَادُ أَهْلُ النَّارِ حُزْنًا إِلَى حُزْنِهِمْ"

"When the people of Paradise have entered Paradise and the people of the Fire have entered the Fire, death will be brought and will be placed between the Fire and Paradise, and then it will be slaughtered, and a call will be made (that), 'O people of Paradise, no more death! O people of the Fire, no more death! 'So the people of Paradise will have happiness added to their previous happiness, and the people of the Fire will have sorrow added to their previous sorrow."

Muslim also recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"يُجَاءُ بِالْـمَوْتِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كَأَنَّهُ كَبْشٌ أَمْلَحُ، فَيُوقَفُ بَيْنَ الْـجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ
فَيُقَالُ: يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ هَلْ تَعْرِفُونَ هَذَا؟ فَيَشْرَئِبُّونَ وَيَنْظُرُونَ وَيَقُولُونَ: نَعَمْ،
هَذَا الْـمَوْتُ – قَالَ–: وَيُقَالُ: يَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ هَلْ تَعْرِفُونَ هَذَا؟ قَالَ: فَيَشْرَئِبُّونَ
وَيَنْظُرُونَ وَيَقُولُونَ : نَعَمْ هَذَا الْـمَوْتُ – قَالَ :– فَيُؤْمَرُ بِهِ فَيُذْبَحُ – قَالَ: – ثُمَّ
يُقَالُ: يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ خُلُودٌ فَلَا مَوْتَ وَيَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ خُلُودٌ فَلَا مَوْتَ"

"Death would be brought on the Day of Resurrection in the form of a white-colored ram. Then it would be made to stand between the Paradise and the Hell and it would be said to the inmates of Paradise: 'Do you recognize this?' They would raise up their necks and look towards it and say, 'Yes, it is death.' Then it would be said to the inmates of Hell-Fire, 'Do you recognize this?' And they would raise up their necks and look and say, 'Yes, it is death.' Then command would be given for slaughtering that and then it would be said, 'O inmates of Paradise, there is an everlasting life for you and no death. And to the inmates of the Hell-Fire, it would be said, 'O inmates of Hell-Fire, there is an everlasting living for you and no death.'"

The above two *Hadiths* clearly indicate that there will be no death in the life of the Hereafter. The scholars of *Tafseer* are unanimous on this.

The Qur'anic context in which the word '*Hayawan*' is mentioned shows that what is meant is Paradise. Allah mentions in the preceding verses(1) that even though the polytheists testified to the fact that He is the Creator and the Sustainer, they refused to worship Him due to their being enamoured with beauties of the life of this world. So Allah makes it clear in the verse that the life of this world is nothing but pastime and that the real life is that of the Hereafter thereby arousing their dislike for the pleasure of this world and encouraging them to seek the life of the Hereafter, calling it *'Hayawan'*, which, as it would be obviously observed, is Paradise.(2)

Six: Dar Al-Muqamah (The Everlasting Home)

The word *'Dar Al-Muqamah'*, is mentioned in reference to the abode of delight in the Hereafter. It is mentioned once in *Surah Fatir* in Allah's statement:

﴿دَارَ الْمُقَامَةِ﴾

" (Dar al-Muqamah) a home that will last forever." (Fatir 35:35)

The everlasting abode is the place from where will be no departure or expulsion. This is Paradise, the abode of bliss and eternity.

Referring to Paradise as the everlasting abode, indicates that this worldly life is short and finite, and that its inhabitants will inevitably move from there to an eternal life. As Paradise would be an everlasting abode for its dwellers, so would Hell-Fire be an

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(1) The verses are:
"If you were to ask them: "Who has created the heavens and the earth and subjected the sun and the moon?" They will surely reply: *'Allah.'* How then are they deviating (as polytheists and disbelievers)? *Allah* enlarges the provision for whom He wills of His slaves, and straitens it for whom (He wills). Verily, *Allah* is the All-Knower of everything. If you were to ask them: Who sends down water (rain) from the sky, and gives life therewith to the earth after its death? They will surely reply: *'Allah.'* Say: "All the praises and thanks be to *Allah*!" Nay! Most of them have no sense." (Al-'Ankabut 29:61-63)

(2) See: *At-Tafseeer Al-Kabeer* 25/91

eternal dwelling for its people. However, the everlasting abode referred to in the verse is Paradise. These are some attributes of the dwellers of Paradise mentioned in the verse,

﴿لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ ٣٥﴾

'where toil will touch us not, nor will weariness touch us' (1).

Are Names of Paradise Synonymous or Different?

When an observer takes a keen look at these names, he would realize that they all apply to the one substance which is Paradise. This is because; its dwellers are meant to live there forever and ever. It is the garden of delight due to all kinds of enjoyments that are there, and there is nothing there but pure bliss. It is the garden of settlement because it is therein that the righteous slaves of Allah would settle down. It is the Garden of Eden and the abode of safety and security for its dwellers will leave therein in absolute safety and security. It is the abode of peace because Allah would give peace to its dwellers and all that is therein is peaceful. It is the abode of everlasting life. All these names apply to the entire Paradise.(2)

This is in view of the authentic *Hadiths* recorded in this regard. Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that Umm Ar-Rubai' bint Al-Bara', the mother of Harithah bin Suraqah came to the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and said," O Allah's Prophet! Will you tell me about Harithah?" Harithah has been killed (i.e. martyred) on the day of Badr with an arrow thrown by an unidentified person. She added, " If he is in Paradise, I will be patient; otherwise, I will weep bitterly for him." He said,

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/22/139; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 4/529; *At-Tafseer Al-K -beer* 26/27; *At-Tas-hil fi Ulum At-Tanzeel* 3/346; and *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 8/22/199

(2) See: *Wasf Al-Firdaws Abdul-Malik ibn Habib* p20; and At-Tadhkirah by al-Qurtubi 2/597

"يَا أُمَّ حَارِثَةَ إِنَّهَا جِنَانٌ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ وَإِنَّ ابْنَكِ أَصَابَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ الْأَعْلَى"

"O mother of Hartha! There are Gardens in Paradise and your son got the Al-*Firdaws Al-A'la* (i.e. the best place in Paradise)."

It could be inferred from the Prophet's statement, 'There are Gardens in Paradise' that names of Paradise are synonymous. Each of the names mentioned above applies, in essence, to the abode of bliss in the Hereafter though some of them have different descriptions. For example, *Firdaws* is used to describe the highest and the best part of Paradise. The Throne of the Most Merciful Lord is situated on top of it, and it is from it that rivers of Paradise flow.(1)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p127

Number of Paradises

The word 'Paradise' is mentioned in the Qur'an in singular and plural forms, as it has been earlier explained. However, it is only in *Surah* Ar-Rahmaan that a specific number of Paradises is given. That is in the statement of Allah:

﴿ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ (٤٦) ﴾

"But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two Gardens (i.e. in Paradise)." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:46)

Allah then mentions the descriptions of the two Gardens in His statement:

﴿ فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٤٧) ذَوَاتَآ أَفْنَانٍ (٤٨) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٤٩)
فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ (٥٠) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٥١) فِيهِمَا مِن كُلِّ فَٰكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ
(٥٢) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٥٣) مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍۭ بَطَآئِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۚ وَجَنَى
ٱلْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ (٥٤) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٥٥) فِيهِنَّ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ لَمْ
يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَآنٌّ (٥٦) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٥٧) كَأَنَّهُنَّ
ٱلْيَاقُوتُ وَٱلْمَرْجَانُ (٥٨) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٥٩) هَلْ جَزَآءُ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ
إِلَّا ٱلْإِحْسَٰنُ (٦٠) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٦١) ﴾

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? They (the Gardens) have spreading branches. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? In them (both) will be two springs flowing (free). Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? In them (both) will be every kind of fruit in pairs. Then

which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Reclining upon the couches lined with silk brocade, and the fruits of the two Gardens will be near at hand. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Wherein both will be QaaSiraat-ut-Tarf [chaste females (wives) restraining their glances, desiring none except their husbands], with whom no man or jinn has had tamth before them. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? (In beauty) they are like rubies and coral. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Is there any reward for good other than good? Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny?" (Ar-Rahmaan 55:47:61)

After this description, Allah then says:

﴿وَمِن دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ (٦٢)﴾

"And besides these two, there are two other Gardens (i.e. in Paradise)." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:62)

In description of these two other gardens, He says:

﴿فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٦٣) مُدْهَآمَّتَانِ (٦٤) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ
(٦٥) فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ (٦٦) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٦٧) فِيهِمَا
فَٰكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ (٦٨) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٦٩) فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَٰتٌ حِسَانٌ (٧٠)
فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٧١) حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَٰتٌ فِى ٱلْخِيَامِ (٧٢) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ
رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (٧٣) لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَآنٌّ (٧٤) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبَانِ (٧٥) مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِىٍّ حِسَانٍ (٧٦) فَبِأَيِّ ءَالَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكَذِّبَانِ (٧٧) تَبَٰرَكَ ٱسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِى ٱلْجَلَٰلِ وَٱلْإِكْرَامِ (٧٨)﴾

"Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Dark green (in color). Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? In them (both) will be two springs gushing forth. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? In them (both) will be fruits, and date-palms and pomegranates. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Therein (Gardens) will be Khairatun-Hisaan (fair (wives) good and beautiful); Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Hoor (beautiful, fair females) guarded in pavilions; Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? With Whom no man or jinni has had tamth before them. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Reclining on green cushions and rich beautiful mattresses. Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? Blessed be the Name of your Lord (Allah), the Owner of Majesty *and Honor."* (Ar-Rahmaan 55:63-78)

In the above noble verses, Allah informs us that whoever fears Him shall have two gardens. There was a report that these verses were revealed concerning Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq, may Allah be pleased with him, when, one day, he remembered the Day of Resurrection, the Balance, the Paradise regarding when it would be brought near, the Hell regarding when it would be shown, the angels regarding when they would stand in rows, the heavens regarding when they would be folded up, the mountains regarding when they would be blown up, the sun regarding when it would be wrapped up in darkness and the stars regarding when they would fall and scatter; he then said: "How I wish I was just one of these green plants that animals would come and eat and how I wish I was not created (as a human being)." It was then that the verse,

﴿ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَانِ ﴾ (٤٦)

'But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two Gardens' was revealed.(1)

Another report has it that the verses were revealed concerning Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq, may Allah be pleased with him, but on a different occasion. The report says that one day Abu Bakr was presented with a bowl of milk which he hurriedly drank due to his severe thirst. He then asked for the source of the milk and he was told that it was not from a lawful earning. He then sought to cough it out while the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was looking at him. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"رَحِمَكَ الله، لَقَدْأُنْزِلَتْ فِيكَ آيةٌ و تَلا عَلَيْهِ قَوْلَ الله تَعالى

﴿ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَانِ ﴾"

"May Allah have mercy upon you! A verse has indeed been revealed concerning you."

He then recited Allah's statement, 'But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two Gardens."(2)

If it is true that the verse was revealed concerning Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, yet it has general application. For, what counts is the general implication of the statement and not the particular occasion in which it was made.

Therefore, the textual evidence here is that Allah has prepared two Gardens for whoever fears Him and after giving their descriptions, He also mentioned that there are two other Gardens, thereby mentioning four Gardens.

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(1) See: *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 9/7/177; *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 8/196

(2) See: *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 9/17/177

The scholars differ regarding Allah's statement,

﴿ وَمِن دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ ﴾ (٦٢)

'And besides these two, there are two other Gardens' and His statement,

﴿ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَانِ ﴾ (٤٦)

'But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two Gardens'

as to which of the two pairs of the Gardens is better. There are two opinions:

The First Opinion: That the Gardens mentioned in the earlier verse,

﴿ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَانِ ﴾ (٤٦)

'But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two Gardens', (Ar-Rahmaan 55:46)

is better than the ones mentioned in His statement,

﴿ وَمِن دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ ﴾ (٦٢)

'And besides these two, there are two other Gardens'. (Ar-Rahmaan 55:62)

The holders of this opinion argued that the second two Gardens are lesser in degree and merit than the first two ones in view of a number of facts.

1. Preference in mentioning. This indicates that the ones mentioned first enjoy more attention that the ones mentioned later.

2. Allah describes the first two ones as *'Gardens that have spreading branches'* and the other two with *'dark green'* which is normally caused by excessive irrigation. And it is undoubtedly known that branches are more radiant than intertwined trees.

3. The first two Gardens are described as having two free-flowing springs while the other two Gardens are described as having two gushing springs. The free-flowing spring is clearly better than a gushing one, because the former does not only flow freely; it also gushes forth while the latter only gushes forth and does not flow.

4. The first two Gardens are described as,

﴿فِيهِمَا مِن كُلِّ فَٰكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ ﴿٥٢﴾﴾

'In them (both) will be every kind of fruit in pairs', (Ar-Rahmaan 55:52)

while the second two ones are described as, '

﴿فِيهِمَا فَٰكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ ﴿٦٨﴾﴾

In them (both) will be fruits, and date-palms and pomegranates'. (Ar-Rahmaan 55:68)

It can be seen that the first two are more and greater in terms of variety of fruits.

5. Allah says about the dwellers of the first two Gardens,

﴿مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍۭ بَطَآئِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ﴾

'Reclining upon the couches lined with silk brocade'. (Ar-Rahmaan 55:54)

Here, Allah describes the linings of the couches and does not say anything about their exteriors. If the interior could be so

beautiful, then it could be inferred that the exterior would be more beautiful with a greater reason. (The fact that nothing is said about the couches of the second two Gardens indicates that the first two Gardens are greater in merit than the second two.)

6. Allah says about the first two Gardens,

﴿وَجَنَى ٱلْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ﴾

'and the fruits of the two Gardens will be near at hand', (Ar-Rahmaan 55:54)

but says nothing about the other two.

7. He says about the first two Gardens,

﴿فِيهِنَّ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ﴾

'wherein both will be QaaSiraat-ut-Tarf [chaste females (wives)] restraining their glances' (Ar-Rahmaan 55:56)

, and says about the other two,

﴿حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَٰتٌ فِى ٱلْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

'Hoor (beautiful, fair females) guarded in pavilions'. (Ar-Rahmaan 55:72)

There is no doubt that women who voluntarily restrain their glances are better and more meritorious than women who are made to do so by others.

8. Allah describes the women who restrain their glances in the first two verses thus,

﴿كَأَنَّهُنَّ ٱلْيَاقُوتُ وَٱلْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾

'they are like rubies and coral in beauty',(Ar-Rahmaan 55:58) indicating purity, luxuriance and extreme beauty of the color

of their skins, while nothing is said of the women of the other two Gardens.

9. Allah says, after mentioning the descriptions of the first Gardens,

﴿هَلْ جَزَآءُ ٱلْإِحْسَٰنِ إِلَّا ٱلْإِحْسَٰنُ ﴿٦٠﴾﴾

'Is there any reward for (Ihsan) good other than good?' (Ar-Rahmaan 55:60)

What this implies is that those who are deserving of the first Gardens are people of *Ihsan* which is the highest and the peak degree of faith and righteousness. As a result, their reward is commensurately the highest and the most complete goodness which is admittance to the first two Gardens.

The above are a number of reasons for deeming the first two Gardens higher in degree than the other two ones.(1)

The Second Opinion: The second two Gardens mentioned are better and higher in degree than the first two ones. The proof for this is that the statement,

﴿وَمِن دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٦٢﴾﴾

'And besides these two, there are two other Gardens', (Ar-Rahmaan 55:62)

means, 'there are two other Gardens beyond the earlier mentioned ones', indicating that these other two are closer to the Divine Throne, and as such better than the first two ones.(2)

This argument could be refuted by the standard Arabic language usage. For, the Arabic word *'Dun'* mentioned in the verse (and translated as 'besides') linguistically implies what is less in degree, and the context of the Qur'an also indicates the superiority of the first two Gardens over the other two.

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(1) See: *At-Tadhkirah* 2/532; *Hadi Al-Arwah* p135; and *Tafseer al-Qur'an al-'Azeem* 7/481

(2) See: *At-Tadhkirah* 2/533

In addition to this, Ibn Jarir At-Tabari recorded on the authority of Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'ari, may Allah be pleased with him, that he commented on Allah's statement, '

﴿وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِۦ جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two Gardens (i.e. in Paradise)', (Ar-Rahmaan 55:46)

with the following words, "Two gardens of gold for those brought near to Allah." According to another version, "Two gardens of gold for the foremost ones and another two gardens of silver for the Companions of the right."(1)

Since this report from Abu Moosaa, may Allah be pleased with him, has been verified as authentic, it is incumbent upon us to accept its implication.(2)

There is a *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"جَنَّتَانِ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا ، وَجَنَّتَانِ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا، وَمَا بَيْنَ

الْقَوْمِ وَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا رِدَاءُ الْكِبْرِ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فِي جَنَّةِ عَدْنٍ"

"Two gardens, the utensils and the contents of which are of silver, and two other gardens, the utensils and contents of which are of gold. And nothing will prevent the people who will be in the Garden of Eden from seeing their Lord except the curtain of Majesty over His Face."

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(1) See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 13/27/146; Ibn Jarir mentioned that Hamad said, "What I know is that he (i.e. Abu Moosaa) attributed it to the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,." Ibn Hajar regarded its chain of narrators as flawless in Fat'h al-Bari 13/431. It is also recorded and classified as authentic by Al-Hakim.

(2) See: *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 9/27/126

In the light of all the above, it is crystal clear that the first two Gardens are better and higher in degree than the last two ones. Allah knows best.

From the verses of *Surah Ar-Rahmaan*, the authentic *Hadiths* and reports, we can infer that the number of Gardens of Paradise is four and not seven that was attributed to Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father. For, the report is not authentic.(1)

Whenever Paradise in mentioned in the Qur'an in singular form, it is in consideration of connectedness of its trees and lack of differences between them. In this context, it is as if it is a single Garden in which there is no demarcation. Whenever it is mentioned in plural form, it is in consideration of its expansiveness, multitude of its trees, its dwellers, its palaces and its springs as if it is a number of gardens.(2)

We ask Allah the Almighty to make us enter the Abode of Bliss with His mercy. He is indeed Most Generous.

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(1) See: *Al-Mufradat* p98; *At-Tadhkirah* 2/597; *As-Siraj Al-Munir* 1/37; *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 1/202

(2) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 29/128

Chapter Two
Description of Paradise

Width of Paradise

There are two verses in the glorious Qur'an that mention the width of Paradise. The verses are:

﴿وَسَارِعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرۡضُهَا ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلۡأَرۡضُ
أُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ ١٣٣﴾

One: *"And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious."* (Aal 'Imraan 3:133)

﴿سَابِقُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ مَغۡفِرَةٖ مِّن رَّبِّكُمۡ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرۡضُهَا كَعَرۡضِ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ أُعِدَّتۡ
لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ بِٱللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِۦۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضۡلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤۡتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلۡفَضۡلِ
ٱلۡعَظِيمِ ٢١﴾

Two: *"Race with one another in hastening towards forgiveness from your Lord (Allah), and Paradise the width whereof is as the width of the heaven and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messengers. That is the Grace of Allah which He* *bestows on whom He is pleased with. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty.*" (Al-Hadeed 57:21)

The Lord of *honor* and Majesty mentioned that the width of Paradise is as that of the heaven and the earth. The fact is also mentioned in a *Hadith* recorded by Muslim on the authority of *Anas bin* Malik – may Allah be pleased with him , who narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, sent Busaisah as a scout to see what the caravan of Abu Sufyan was doing. He came (back and met the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, in his house) where there was nobody except myself and the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. I do not remember whether he (Anas) made an exception of some wives of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, or not and told him the news of the caravan. (Having heard the news), the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, came out (hurriedly), spoke to the people and said,

"إِنَّ لَنَا طَلِبَةً فَمَنْ كَانَ ظَهْرُهُ حَاضِرًا فَلْيَرْكَبْ مَعَنَا"

'We are in need (of men); whoever has an animal to ride upon ready with him should ride with us.'

People began to ask him permission for bringing their riding animals which were grazing on the hillocks near Madinah. He said, 'No. (I want) only those who have their riding animals ready.' So the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and his Companions proceeded towards Badr and reached there, forestalling the polytheists (of Makkah). When the polytheists (also) reached there, the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said to his Companions:

"لَا يَقَدَمَنَّ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ إِلَى شَيْءٍ حَتَّى أَكُونَ أَنَا دُونَهُ"

'None of you should step forward to (do) anything unless I am

ahead of him.'

The polytheists (now) advanced (towards us), and the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

"قُومُوا إِلَى جَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ"

'Get up to enter Paradise which is equal in width to the heavens and the earth.'

'Umair ibn al- Humam al-*Ansaari* said: 'Messenger of Allah, is Paradise equal in extent to the heavens and the earth?' He said:

"نَعَمْ"

Yes.

'Umair said: 'My goodness!' The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, asked him,

"مَا يَحْمِلُكَ عَلَى قَوْلِكَ: بَخٍ بَخٍ"

'What prompted you to utter these words?'

He said: 'Messenger of Allah, nothing but the desire that I be among its residents.' He said,

"فَإِنَّكَ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا"

'You are (surely) among its residents.'

He took out dates from his bag and began to eat them. Then he said, 'If I were to live until I have eaten all these dates of mine, it would be a long life.' (The narrator said): He threw away all the dates he had with him. Then he fought the enemies until he was killed."

The textual proof in this *Hadith* is that the Messenger of

Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, mentioned that Paradise is as wide as the heaven and the earth.

Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allah be pleased with him and his father, said: "The seven heavens and the seven earths would be joined together as parts of clothes are joined to one another. That is the width of Paradise." (1)

The purpose here is to explain its expansiveness and greatness. So, it was likened to the most expansive creation of Allah known to man.(2) For, there is nothing known to mankind greater in size than the heaven and the earth.

An example of this is Allah's statement concerning eternal life in Paradise and Hell:

﴿خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ﴾

"They will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure." (Hud 11:107)

The longest abiding thing we know is the heavens and the earth. That is why Allah addressed His servants according to what they know. The same thing happened in description of the width of Paradise.(3)

Allah particularly mentioned the width – and did not mention the length – in order to explain how great and expansive the length would be. It is known that the length of something is generally and in most cases more than its width. So, mentioning the width is an indication that the length is greater, as opposed to mentioning the length alone which does not indicate the expansiveness of the width. For, something that is very long may be small in width

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Muhammad Shakir 7/207

(2) See: *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 1/4/547; and *Al-Kash-shaaf* 1/463

(3) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 9/5

such as a rope or a thread.(1)

The following are some *Hadiths* about the width of Paradise.

1. Abdullah ibn Mas'ood(2), may Allah be pleased with him, narrated:

"إِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ آخِرَ أَهْلِ النَّارِ خُرُوجًا مِنْهَا، وَآخِرَ أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ دُخُولًا: رَجُلٌ يَخْرُجُ مِنَ النَّارِ حَبْوًا، فَيَقُولُ اللهُ لَهُ اذْهَبْ فَادْخُلِ الْـجَنَّةَ، فَيَأْتِيهَا فَيُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهَا مَلْأَى فَيَرْجِعُ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ وَجَدْتُهَا مَلْأَى فَيَقُولُ اللهُ لَهُ اذْهَبْ فَادْخُلِ الْـجَنَّةَ، قَالَ: فَيَأْتِيهَا فَيُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهَا مَلْأَى، فَيَرْجِعُ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ وَجَدْتُهَا مَلْأَى ، فَيَقُولُ اللهُ لَهُ اذْهَبْ فَادْخُلِ الْـجَنَّةَ فَإِنَّ لَكَ مِثْلَ الدُّنْيَا وَعَشَرَةَ أَمْثَالِهَا أَوْ إِنَّ لَكَ مِثْلَ عَشَرَةِ أَمْثَالِ الدُّنْيَا، قَالَ: فَيَقُولُ: تَسْخَرُ مِنِّي أَوْ أَتَضْحَكُ بِي وَأَنْتَ الْـمَلِكُ؟ قَالَ: فَلَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ضَحِكَ حَتَّى بَدَتْ نَوَاجِذُهُ وَقَالَ: كَانَ يُقَالُ: ذَاكَ أَدْنَى أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ مَنْزِلَةً"

"I know the person who will be the last to come out of the (Hell) Fire, and the last to enter Paradise. He will be a man who will come out of the (Hell) Fire crawling, and Allah will say to him, 'Go and enter Paradise.' He will go to it, but he will imagine that it had been filled, and then he will return and say, 'O Lord, I have found it full.' Allah will say, 'Go and enter Paradise, and you will have what equals the world and ten times as much (or, you will have as much as ten times the like of the world).' On that, the man will say, 'Do you mock at me (or laugh at me) though You are the King?" I saw Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, (while saying that) smiling that his premolar teeth became visible. It is said that will be the lowest in degree amongst the people of Paradise." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

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(1) See: *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 1/4/547; *Al-Kash-shaf* 4/65; *Tafseer Ath-Tha'alabi* 1/311 and *As-Siraj Al-Munir* 4/212

(2) He is the great companion, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ood ibn Ghafil bin Habib, Abu 'Abdur-Rahman al-Hudhayli, may Allah be pleased with him. He embraced Islam in its earliest days and participated in the two emigrations. He participated in the battle of Badr and all other campaigns and permanently kept the company of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. He was the one in charge of his shoes. He was the first person to recite the Qur'an aloud in Makkah. He died in the year 32 A.H. in Madinah and he was buried there.

2. Muslim and At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah[1], may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "Moses asked his Lord: Who amongst the inhabitants of Paradise is the lowest to rank? He (Allah) said:

"سَأَلَ مُوسَى رَبَّهُ مَا أَدْنَى أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ مَنْزِلَةً؟ قَالَ: هُوَ رَجُلٌ يَجِيءُ بَعْدَ مَا أُدْخِلَ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْـجَنَّةَ فَيُقَالُ لَهُ: ادْخُلِ الْـجَنَّةَ. فَيَقُولُ: أَيْ رَبِّ كَيْفَ؟ وَقَدْ نَزَلَ النَّاسُ مَنَازِلَـهُمْ وَأَخَذُوا أَخَذَاتِهِمْ ؟ فَيُقَالُ لَهُ: أَتَرْضَى أَنْ يَكُونَ لَكَ مِثْلُ مُلْكِ مَلِكٍ مِنْ مُلُوكِ الدُّنْيَا: فَيَقُولُ: رَضِيتُ رَبِّ. فَيَقُولُ: لَكَ ذَلِكَ وَمِثْلُهُ وَمِثْلُهُ وَمِثْلُهُ وَمِثْلُهُ. فَقَالَ فِي الْـخَامِسَةِ: رَضِيتُ رَبِّ. فَيَقُولُ: هَذَا لَكَ وَعَشَرَةُ أَمْثَالِهِ، وَلَكَ مَا اشْتَهَتْ نَفْسُكَ وَلَذَّتْ عَيْنُكَ"

The person who would be admitted into Paradise last of all among those deserving of Paradise who are admitted to it. I would be said to him: Enter Paradise. He would say: O my Lord! How (should I enter) while the people have settled in their apartments and taken the shares (portions)? It would be said to him: Would you be pleased if there be for you like the kingdom of a king amongst the kings of the world? He would say: I am pleased my Lord. He (Allah) would say: For you is that, and like

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[1] He is the great companion Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah ibn Abi 'Amir Ath-Thaqafi. May Allah be pleased with him and please him. He embraced Islam before the '*Umrah* of Hudaybiyyah and the Pledge of Ridwan. He was renowned for his astuteness. He died in Kufah in the year fifty A.H. See: *Usd Al-Ghabah* 5/248

that, and like that, and like that, and that. He would say at the fifth (point): I am well pleased, my Lord. He (Allah) would say: It is for you and, ten times like it, and for you is what your soul desires and your eye enjoys. He would say: I am well pleased, my Lord. He (Moses) said: (Which is) the highest of their (inhabitants of Paradise) ranks? He (Allah) said: They are those whom I choose. I establish their *honor* with My own hand and then set a seal over it (and they would be blessed with Bounties) which no eye has seen, no ear has heard and no human mind has perceived: and this is substantiated by Allah's statement:

﴿فَلَا تَعۡلَمُ نَفۡسٞ مَّآ أُخۡفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعۡيُنٖ جَزَآءَۢ بِمَا كَانُواْ يَعۡمَلُونَ ١٧﴾

"No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do." (As-Sajdah 32:17)

3. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Sahl ibn Sahl As-*Sa'eedi*[1], may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ شَجَرَةً يَسِيرُ الرَّاكِبُ فِي ظِلِّهَا مِائَةَ عَامٍ لَا يَقْطَعُهَا"

"In Paradise there is a tree so big that in its shade a rider may travel for one hundred years without being able to cross it."

4. Muslim recorded on the authority of 'Utbah ibn Ghazwan[2], may Allah be pleased with him, who gave a sermon in which he praised Allah and said:

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[1] He is the great companion Sahl ibn Sa'd ibn malik ibn Khalid Al-*Ansaari* As-*Sa'eedi*, may Allah be pleased with him and please him. He was one of the most famous Companions. He was said to the last companion to die in Madinah. He died in the year 91 A.H. See: *Al-Isabah* 2/88

[2] He is 'Utbah ibn Ghazwan ibn Jabir Al-Mazini, may Allah be pleased with him and please him. He was the seventh person to embrace Islam. He immigrated to Abyssinia and then returned to Madinah. He later migrated to Madinah in the company of Al-Miqdad, may Allah be pleased with him. He participated in the Battle of Badr and other subsequent campaign. He died in the year 17 A.H. at age 57. See: *Usd Al-Ghabah* 3/565

”وَلَقَدْ ذُكِرَ لَنا أَنَّ مَا بَيْنَ مِصْرَاعَيْنِ مِنْ مَصَارِيعِ الْـجَنَّةِ مَسِيرَةُ
أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً، وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّ عَلَيْهَا يَوْمٌ وَهُوَ كَظِيظٌ مِنَ الزِّحَامِ“

“We have been told that between every two door leaves of Paradise is a distance which one would be able to cover in forty years from one end to another, and a day would come when it would be fully packed.”

5. Al-Bukhari reported that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا اللهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ
فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ، مَا بَيْنَ الدَّرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ“

“There are in Paradise one hundred degrees, which Allah has prepared for the fighters in His cause. The distance between every two degree is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth.”

6. Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”لَا يَزَالُ يُلْقَى فِيهَا وَتَقُولُ: هَلْ مِنْ مَزِيدٍ حَتَّى يَضَعَ فِيهَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ قَدَمَهُ
فَيَنْزَوِي بَعْضُهَا إِلَى بَعْضٍ ثُمَّ تَقُولُ: قَدْ قَدْ بِعِزَّتِكَ وَكَرَمِكَ ، وَلَا تَزَالُ الْـجَنَّةُ
تَفْضُلُ حَتَّى يُنْشِئَ اللهُ لَهَا خَلْقًا فَيُسْكِنَهُمْ فَضْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ“

“The people will be thrown into Hell (Fire) and it will keep on saying, ‘Is there any more?’ till the Lord of the worlds puts His Foot over it, whereupon its different sides will come close to each other, and it will say, ‘Enough! Enough, by Your honor and generosity!’ Paradise will remain spacious enough to accommodate more people until Allah will create some more people and let them dwell in the superfluous space of Paradise.” (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

The above *Hadiths* and other authentic narrations indicate that Paradise is extremely spacious and expansive and that its width cannot be sufficiently fathomed by humans. If the least of the dwellers of Paradise in degree could have what is equal to ten-folds of this world, and a rider would travel under the shade of just one of its trees without being able to cross it, and the distance between every two door leaves of Paradise is a distance which one would be able to cover in forty years from one end to another, and that Paradise has one hundred degrees, with the distance between every two degree is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth, and its width is as that of the heavens and the earth then one could imagine what its length could be?

Indeed none knows that except Allah and Allah has power over all things.

However, Satan has confused some simple-minded people thereby leading them to equalling what they physically see with the knowledge of the Unseen. This is a result of their corrupted minds, perverted nature and satanic insinuations – may Allah protect us from that. According to their warped assumption, they hold that the expansiveness of Paradise in this way negates the existence of Hell.

The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about this. According to the report recorded by Al-Hakim in Al-Mustadrak, Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him narrated: “A man came to the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and said, ‘O Muhammad, if you consider the fact that Paradise’s width is as that of the heaven and the earth, where then is Hell?!’ The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, answered,

”أَرَأَيْتَ اللَّيْلَ الَّذِي قَدْ أَلْبَسَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَأَيْنَ جَعَلَ النَّهَارَ“

‘Just tell me, when the night covers everything with its darkness, where would the day be?!

'The man said, 'Allah knows best.' The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, then said,

"كَذَلِكَ اللهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاء

'That is how Allah does whatever He wills!'"

At-Tabari recorded in His *Tafseer* on the authority of Yazeed bin Al-Asamm who narrated that a man from among the people of the Scripture came to Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allah be pleased with him and his father, and said, "You claim that Paradise's width is as that of the heaven and the earth; where then will be Hell?!" Ibn 'Abbaas responded, "Now tell me when the night comes, where will the day be; and when the day comes, where will the night be?!"(1)

The answer in the above *Hadith* and narration was well understood by the respective questioners. The answer was suitable to their understanding and it has two potential meanings:

One: Our inability to see the night during the day does not necessarily mean that the night does not exist. The greatest physical proof for this is that we hear about many countries that exist in this world and we do not deny their existence. Therefore, our lack of seeing those countries does not mean that they do not exist. The same applies to Paradise and Hell. The existence of Paradise and the fact that its width is as that of the heaven and the earth; certainly do not mean that Hell does not exist. For, it is situated wherever Allah wills it to be situated.

Two: If the day can be on the eastern side of the earth and the night can be on the western side, the same could happen to Paradise and Hell. Paradise is at the uppermost of the high and its width is as that of the heavens and the earth; and Hell is at the opposite side at the lowest of the low. Therefore, there is no contradiction between existence of Paradise and existence of Hell(2). Allah knows best.

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(1) See: *Tafseer Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 7/212
(2) See: *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* by Ibn Katheer 2/99

Degrees of Paradise

Paradise comprises of vastly varying degrees. The righteous servants of Allah will be awarded different degrees according to their faith and piety.(1)

In the Book of Allah, High and Exalted, mention has been made on how servants excel one another with a degree or more in this world and the Hereafter. I am going to discuss the verses that mention servants' excelling one another in degrees in Paradise.

One: Allah says in *Surah Aal 'Imraan*:

﴿أَفَمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَ رِضۡوَٰنَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَنۢ بَآءَ بِسَخَطٖ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَأۡوَىٰهُ جَهَنَّمُۚ وَبِئۡسَ
ٱلۡمَصِيرُ ١٦٢ هُمۡ دَرَجَٰتٌ عِندَ ٱللَّهِۗ وَٱللَّهُ بَصِيرُۢ بِمَا يَعۡمَلُونَ ١٦٣﴾

"Is then one who follows (seeks) the good Pleasure of Allah (by not taking illegally a part of the booty) like the one who draws on himself the Wrath of Allah (by taking a part of the booty illegally - Ghulul)? - his abode is Hell, and worst, indeed is that destination! They are in varying grades with Allah, and Allah is All-Seer of what they do." (Aal 'Imraan 3:162,163)

This explanation has come to differentiate between the reward of the obedient and that of the disobedient after it has been mentioned in brief in the preceding verse:

﴿ثُمَّ تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفۡسٖ مَّا كَسَبَتۡ﴾

"Then every person shall be paid in full what he has earned,." (Aal 'Imraan 3:161)

The one who followed the path of Allah's pleasure is certainly not like the one who drew upon himself the wrath of Allah. The one who followed the path of Allah's pleasure will earn honor and bountiful reward and the one who drew upon himself Allah's wrath will earn ignominy and painful torment. So they are different. Another meaning that could be inferred from the verse is that those who deserve good reward are of different grades as those who deserve torment are also of different grades.(1)

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(1) See: *Fatawa Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah* 11/188

The grades of those who follow the path of Allah's pleasure vary according to their faith and piety. Some are higher in grades than others.(2)

This is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَصَامَ رَمَضَانَ، كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ جَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ أَوْجَلَسَ فِي أَرْضِهِ الَّتِي وُلِدَ فِيهَا. فَقَالُوا: يَارَسُولَ اللهِ أَفَلَا نُبَشِّرُ النَّاسَ ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا اللهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ مَا بَيْنَ الدَّرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ فَاسْأَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الْجَنَّةِ وَأَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ – أُرَاهُ قَالَ: وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْجَنَّةِ"

"Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger, offer prayer perfectly and fasts the month of Ramadan, will rightfully be granted Paradise by Allah, no matter whether he fights in Allah's Cause or remains in the land where he is born." The people said, " O Allah's Messenger! Shall we acquaint the people with this

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 7/367; Ma 'alim At-*Ta - zeel* 1/576; and Al-Kash-shaf 1/476

(2) See: *Ma 'ani al-Qur'an by al-Farraa* 1/246; *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 2/282 and *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 3/102

good news?" He said," Paradise has one-hundred grades which Allah has reserved for the *Mujahideen* who fight in His Cause, and the distance between each of two grades is like the distance between the Heaven and the Earth. So, when you ask Allah (for something), ask for *Al-Firdaws* which is the best and highest part of Paradise." (i.e. the sub-narrator added," I think the Prophet also said, 'Above it (*i.e. Al-Firdaws*) is the Throne of the Beneficent (i.e. Allah), and from it originate the rivers of Paradise.)"

The fact that the people of Paradise have grades means that some of them are above others. Those who are above will notice that they excel those who are below them while those who are below will believe that no one excels them in grade.(1)

As for the abodes of the dwellers of Hell, they are not referred to as grades. Rather, they are rather referred to as depths. Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِى ٱلدَّرْكِ ٱلْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ﴾

"Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth (grade) of the Fire; no helper will you find for them." (An-Nisaa' 4:145)

Grades are the means used to rise to the top. It is for those who aspire to rise up from among those who follow the path of Allah's pleasure. The depth is the means used to descend to the low; it is for those who bring Allah's wrath upon themselves and whose lot is disgrace and ignominy.(2)

In the above verse, mentioning of the grades to the exclusion of the depths is an indication that whoever follows the path of Allah's wrath deserves no mentioning due to his ignominy.

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(1) See: *Ad-Dur Al-Manthur* 2/93

(2) See: *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 1/362; and *Tafseer Al-Manar* by Rashid Ridha 4/220

Two: Allah says:

﴿لَّا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْقَٰعِدُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُو۟لِى ٱلضَّرَرِ وَٱلْمُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ
بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ فَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۚ وَكُلًّا
وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَفَضَّلَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُجَٰهِدِينَ عَلَى ٱلْقَٰعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٩٥﴾ دَرَجَٰتٍ مِّنْهُ
وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٩٦﴾﴾

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives above those who sit (at home). Unto each, Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight, above those who sit (at home) by a huge reward. Degrees of (higher) grades from Him, and Forgiveness and Mercy. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (An-Nisaa' 4:95,96)

Preceding these two verses is Allah's censuring of some *Mujahideen* in the Battle of Badr for some actions they took. Allah says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا۟ إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا۟ وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَنْ أَلْقَىٰٓ
إِلَيْكُمُ ٱلسَّلَٰمَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا فَعِندَ
ٱللَّهِ مَغَانِمُ كَثِيرَةٌ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كُنتُم مِّن قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَتَبَيَّنُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿٩٤﴾﴾

"O you who believe! When you go (to fight) in the Cause of Allah, verify (the truth), and say not to anyone who greets you (by embracing Islam): "You are not a believer"; seeking the perishable goods of the worldly life. There are much more profits and booties with Allah. Even as he is now, so were you yourselves before till Allah conferred on you His Favors (i.e. guided you to Islam), therefore, be cautious in discrimination. Allah is Ever Well-Aware of what you do." (An-Nisaa' 4:94)

It is in order that this censuring may not be viewed as diminishing to the virtue of these *Mujahideen* that Allah quickly explains the differences in categories of the believers in accordance with the differences in the way in which each of them fought in the cause of Allah. This is not only in order to encourage the fighters to strive more; but also to stir up those who wanted to stay behind to lift themselves up from such abyss, and join the ranks of the fighters in the cause of Allah and thereby attain high degrees.[1] However, those who have genuine excuses were exempted.

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Zaid bin Thabit, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, asked him to write down Allah's statement:

﴿لَّا يَسْتَوِى ٱلْقَٰعِدُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُو۟لِى ٱلضَّرَرِ وَٱلْمُجَٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ﴾

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home) and those who strive and fight in the Cause of Allah." (An-Nisaa' 4:95)

Zaid added: Ibn Um Maktum came while the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was dictating to me and said, "O Allah's Messenger! By Allah, if I had the power to fight (in Allah's Cause), I would," and he was a blind man. So Allah revealed to his Messenger while his thigh was on my thigh, and his thigh became so heavy that I was afraid it might fracture my thigh.

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[1] See: *Al-Kash-shaaf* 1/555; *Tafseer Abu Sa'ud* 1/220; *Al-Futuhat Al-Ilahiyyah* 1/415 and *Tafseer Al-Qasimi* 5/394

Then that state of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, passed and Allah revealed:

﴿غَيْرُ أُوْلِي الضَّرَرِ﴾

" Except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame etc)." (An-Nisaa' 4:95)

The meaning of the two verses is that Allah explains a great difference between those who fought in the cause of Allah with their lives and wealth and those who sat at home doing nothing. However, Allah exempted the disabled and people with valid excuses. He then explains that those who fought in the way of Allah exceled the disabled ones who could not fight with a single grade; because the fighter had the intention of fighting and actually carried out the fighting. As for the disabled, he only had the intention but could not carry out the fighting due to his disability. Therefore, he is counted among the believers who fought. It is only that he was drawn back by his excuse.[1]

This is supported by a *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari and Abu Dawud on the authority of *Anas bin* Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ أَقْوَامًا بِالْمَدِينَةِ خَلْفَنَا مَا سَلَكْنَا شِعْبًا وَلَا وَادِيًا إِلَّا وَهُمْ مَعَنَا فِيهِ، حَبَسَهُمُ الْعُذْرُ"

"Some people have remained behind us in Madinah and we never crossed a mountain path or a valley, but they were with us (i.e. sharing the reward with us), as they have been held back by a (legal) excuse." (This is Al-Bukhari's version)

Therefore, the fighters in Allah's cause only excel the disabled ones with one degree; and Allah has promised both of them good

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[1] See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 9/85; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 2/135; and Ad-Dur Al-Manthur 2/204

reward in the Hereafter, which is Paradise.[1]

Allah then explains that He made the fighters in His cause excel those who sat down at home without excuse with great reward. This reward is in form of grades from Him which He will endow them with, in the Hereafter. They are degrees in Paradise and *honors*. So He would elevate them above those who did not participate, due to the afflictions they suffered in His cause. Therefore, a fighter in the cause of Allah is higher than a disabled person by a degree and than a healthy person who did not fight by many degrees.[2]

There are other authentic *Hadiths* that support the fact that a fighter in the cause of Allah is better than a non-fighter by many degrees. Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَصَامَ رَمَضَانَ كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللهِ أَنْ يُدْخِلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ جَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ أَوْ جَلَسَ فِي أَرْضِهِ الَّتِي وُلِدَ فِيهَا. فَقَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَفَلَا نُبَشِّرُ النَّاسَ ؟ قَالَ : إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا اللهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ، مَا بَيْنَ الدَّرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ"

"Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger, offer prayer perfectly and fasts the month of Ramadan, will rightfully be granted Paradise by Allah, no matter whether he fights in Allah's Cause or remains in the land where he is born." The people said, "O Allah's Messenger! Shall we acquaint the people with this good news?" He said," Paradise has one-hundred grades which Allah has reserved for the *Mujahideen* who fight in His Cause, and the distance between each of two grades is like the distance between the Heaven and the Earth. So, when you ask Allah (for something), ask for *Al-Firdaws* which is the best and highest part of Paradise." (i.e. The sub-narrator added, "I think the Prophet also said, 'Above it (i.e. Al-*Firdaws*) is the Throne of Beneficent (i.e. Allah), and from it originate the rivers of Paradise.)"

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[1] See: *Tafseer At-Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 9/96

[2] *Tafseer At-Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 9/99

The purport of this *Hadith* is very clear. Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger and adheres to the teachings of Islam shall attain Allah's promise of admittance to Paradise whether he participates in the struggle in the cause of Allah or not.

Ahmad and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said to him:

"يَا أَبَا سَعِيدٍ مَنْ رَضِيَ بِاللهِ رَبًّا وَبِالإِسْلَامِ دِينًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ نَبِيًّا وَجَبَتْ لَهُ الْجَنَّةُ" فَعَجِبَ لَهَا أَبُو سَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ: أَعِدْهَا عَلَيَّ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ فَفَعَلَ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: وَأُخْرَى يُرْفَعُ بِهَا الْعَبْدُ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ". قَالَ وَمَا هِيَ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ قَالَ: الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ".

"Abu Sa'eed, whoever cheerfully accepts Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion and Muhammad as his Messenger is necessarily entitled to enter Paradise. He (Abu Sa'eed) wondered at it and said: Messenger of Allah, repeat it for me. He (the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) did that and said: There is another act which elevates the position of a man in Paradise to a grade one hundred (higher), and the elevation between one grade and the other is equal to the height of the heaven from the earth. He (Abu Sa'eed) said: What is that act? He replied: *Jihad* in the way of Allah, *Jihad* in the way of Allah!" (This is Muslim's version)

It is clearly understood from this *Hadith* that Paradise have

different grades, and that they are hundred. We ask Allah to make us among the fighters in His cause, and to bless us with martyrdom in His way. He, indeed, has power over all things.

Three: Allah says:

﴿وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا۟ ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَٰفِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾﴾

"For all there will be degrees (or ranks) according to what they did. And your Lord is not unaware of what they do." (Al-An'am 6:132)

The verses that precede this verse make general mention of the situations of those deserving rewards on the Day of Resurrection and those deserving punishment.

Allah informs us that those who adhere to the teachings of Islam and follow its right path that:

﴿لَهُمْ دَارُ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُم بِمَا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾﴾

"For them will be the home of peace (Paradise) with their Lord. And He will be their Walî (Helper and Protector) because of what they used to do." (Al-An'am 6:127)

As for those who deviated from the right path, their abode would be Hell; and they would be asked and they would confess to their own obstinacy. They would be rebuked and they would testify against themselves that they were warned and that Messengers came to them and explained to them the straight path and that they obstinately followed the path of disbelief and that Allah did not do any injustice to them by punishing them. Allah then informs us that each of those who obeyed or disobeyed Him would have varying grades.(1)

Each legally obligated person (*Mukallaf*) whether a believer or disbeliever has a grade of reward or punishment that is different from that of others. This will be in accordance with each person's degree of obedience or disobedience to Allah.(1)

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 13/198

In another verse, Allah explains that differences in the grades of the righteous ones are greater, and that the degrees by which they excel one another is much higher that that by which the people of this world excel one another. Allah says:

﴿ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَلَلْأَخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَٰتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيلًا ﴾

"See how We prefer one above another (in this world), and verily, the Hereafter will be greater in degrees and greater in preferment." (Al-Israa' 17:21)

According to this verse, people's excelling of one another in the Hereafter will be greater than their excelling of another in this world.(2)

Four: Allah says in *Surah* Al-Anfal:

﴿ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّاۚ لَّهُمْ دَرَجَٰتٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ④ ﴾

"It is they who are the believers in truth. For them are grades of dignity with their Lord, and Forgiveness and a generous provision (Paradise)." (Al-Anfal 8:4)

The above noble verse came as a conclusion to the preceding verses. Those who are described as fearing Allah, having increased faith whenever the Qur'an is recited to them, putting their trust in Allah, establishing prayer and spending out what Allah has provided for them are the real believers. They are the ones

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(1) See: *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 6/153; *Zad Al-Maseer* 3/126; and *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 4/224

(2) See: *Majmu' Fataawa Ibn Taymiyyah* 11/188

deserving high degrees in Paradise. The meaning of 'grades' in the verse is high degrees and enviable positions in Paradise.(1) It has been earlier mentioned that the distance between every two grades in Paradise is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth, as shown by the *Hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him.

Some of the degrees and grades of Paradise are higher than others.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'eedi, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ لَيَتَرَاءَوْنَ الْغرفَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ ، كَمَا تَتَرَاءَوْنَ الْكَوْكَبَ فِي السَّمَاءِ"

"The people of Paradise will see the chambers in Paradise as you see a star in the sky." Abu Sa'eed added:" As you see a glittering star remaining in the eastern horizon and the western horizon."

Al-Bukhari also recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ يَتَرَاءَوْنَ أَهْلَ الْغُرَفِ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ، كَمَا يَتَرَاءَوْنَ الْكَوْكَبَ الدُّرِّيَّ الْغَابِرَ فِي الأُفُقِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ أَوِ الْمَغْرِبِ لِتَفَاضُلِ مَا بَيْنَهُمْ قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ الله ، تِلْكَ مَنَازِلُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ لَا يَبْلُغُهَا غَيْرُهُمْ قَالَ: بَلَى وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ ! رِجَالٌ آمَنُوا بِالله وَصَدَّقُوا الْمُرْسَلِينَ"

"The people of Paradise will look at the dwellers of the lofty mansions (i.e. a superior place in Paradise) in the same way as one looks at a brilliant star far away in the East or in the West on the horizon; all that is because of their superiority over one another (in rewards)." On that the people said, "O Allah's Messenger! Are these lofty mansions for the Prophets, which nobody else can reach?" The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, replied, "No! By Allah, in whose Hands my life is, these are for the men who believed in Allah and also believed in the Messengers."(1)

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 13/398; and *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 8/14

This and similar *Hadiths* show the greatness of Paradise and its varying degrees and classes. They also show that all these grades are created by Allah. We ask Allah, the Lord of majestic Throne to not deny us His bountiful mercy. We equally beseech Him to include us among the dwellers of Paradise and to make us succeed in deeds that please Him. He is indeed All-Hearer, Accepter of supplications.

Five: Allah says in *Surah At-Tawbah:*

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ بِأَمْوَٰلِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً
عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَآئِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

"Those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful." (At-Tawbah 9:20)

In the verse that precedes that above verse, Allah refutes any equality between the providing water to the pilgrims and maintaining the Sacred Mosque on one hand, and having faith and fighting in the cause of Allah on the other. He says:

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(1) This is Al-Bukhari's versions. The *Hadith* is recorded in varying versions but with the same meaning by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud, An-Nasaai and At-Tirmidhi

﴿أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ ٱلْحَآجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ ٱلْمَسْجِدِ ٱلْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ
وَجَٰهَدَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ لَا يَسْتَوُۥنَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾﴾

"Do you consider the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and the maintenance of Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah) as equal to the worth of those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah? They are not equal before Allah. And Allah guides not those people who are the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers)." (At-Tawbah 9:19)

In the above verse, Allah clearly explains and declares that there is no equality between the actions mentioned in the verse. He also vividly elucidates the meaning of *Jihad* that is it fighting with one's life and wealth.

Whoever believes in Allah, cleanses himself from impurities of polytheism, emigrates from his home for the sake of Allah and struggles in Allah's cause with his wealth and life and puts himself in harm's way in order that Allah's Word may prevail is far higher in degree in Allah's estimation.

Then lack of mentioning those who were excelled in degree indicates that the excelling ones have absolute superiority over anyone else. Those whose attributes are faith, migration in Allah's cause, and fighting in His way with wealth and life are higher in degree and more *honor*able than any of Allah's other servants, whoever he may be.(1)

Six: Allah says in *Surah Al-Israa':*

﴿ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَلَلْءَاخِرَةُ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَٰتٍ وَأَكْبَرُ
تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٢١﴾﴾

"See how We prefer one above another (in this world), and

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 16/13; *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 5/21 and *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 4/10/68

verily, the Hereafter will be greater in degrees and greater in preferment." (Al-Israa' 17:21)

Allah explained in the preceding verse in the same *Surah* that He extends His bounties to those who want this world and those who want the Hereafter; and that His favor in this world is denied to neither a pious nor a sinful person. He then explains further in the verse that the people of the Hereafter excel one another there far more than they excelled one another in this world, and that their degrees in the Hereafter are far greater than the degrees of this world.

With the statement,

﴿ ٱنظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ﴾

'"See how We prefer one above another (in this world)' ,Allah addresses His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, to see how He makes some of His creation excel others in worldly materials – regardless of their being believers or disbelievers. He makes some of them rich and others poor. Allah explains the wisdom behind this with His statements:

﴿ وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَـٰٓئِفَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَـٰتٍ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ﴾

"And it is He Who has made you generations coming after generations, replacing each other on the earth. And He has raised you in ranks, some above others that He may try you in that which He has bestowed on you." (Al-An'am 6:165)

﴿ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۚ وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَـٰتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُم بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا ۗ ﴾

"We Who portion out between them their livelihood in this world, and We raised some of them above others in ranks, so that some may employ others in their work." (Az-Zukhruf 43:32)

The verse tells us that Allah subjects some of His slaves to the service of others though they are all children of Adam. This worldly difference is felt in wealth, position, influence and other worldly matters. If this difference could be recognized in matters of this world, then it should be certainly understood that differences in grades of the Hereafter are greater. The degrees of the dwellers of Paradise will vary. Those with the highest degree among them will be seen by others who are below them as clearly as one sees a shining star.

The Companions of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, recognized this difference in degrees of the Hereafter and were certainly convinced about the same. Ibn 'Abdul-Barr recorded: "People came to the door of 'Umar bin Al-Khattab, may Allah be pleased with him. Among these people were Suhail bin 'Amr, Abu Sufyan ibn Harb and other leading Quraysh men. His gate-keeper came out and informed the the waiting men that 'Umar would give audience first to Suhaib Ar-Rumi and Bilal bin Rabah, may Allah be pleased with them, and those who participated in the Battle of Badr, for he loved them and would not want any harm be done to them. Upon seeing this, Abu Sufyan said, 'I have never seen a day like this! He is giving audience to these slaves while we are here sitting down and he would not attend to us!' Suhail answered him, 'O folks, by Allah, I have seen anger in your faces. If you want to be angry, then you should be angry with yourselves. These men (you regard as slaves) were called to Islam and you also were called. They quickly responded to the call and you retarded. By Allah, what they excel you with of virtue and superiority is in fact greater than the audience with the commander of the faithful for which you are now vying with one another.'"

According to Az-Zamakhshari in his *Tafseer*, *Al-Kash-shaf,* Suhail, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "We are the cause of our own misfortune. These men were invited to Islam and we were also invited. They quickly responded to the call and we retarded. If the difference in degree between them and us can be vividly seen here at Umar's gate, then what of the Hereafter? If you are envious of them for being preferred over you in having audience with Umar, then what Allah has prepared for them in Paradise is definitely greater!"

Differences in degrees and grades of Paradise are greater and more pronounced than those of this world. Rather, there should be no comparison between the two. The degrees of the Hereafter are everlasting and those of this world are ephemeral. Therefore, if a person endeavours to attain superiority in matters of this fleeting world, then the superiority of the Hereafter is better and lasting.

Seven: Allah says:

﴿وَمَن يَأْتِهِۦ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلدَّرَجَٰتُ ٱلْعُلَىٰ﴾

"But whoever comes to Him (Allah) as a believer (in the Oneness of Allah), and has done righteous good deeds, for such are the high ranks (in the Hereafter)." (Ta Ha 20:75)

In the verse that preceded the above verse, a mentioned was made of him who comes to His Lord as a criminal and the recompense of such a person. In converse, this verse mentions the reward of the one who comes to Him as a believer and his reward.

Allah, High and Exalted, explained that whoever dies in a state of faith and not as a polytheist, having carried out the righteous deeds that Allah has made obligatory upon him and having abstained from all that He declared as unlawful, the reward of such a person will be high ranks in Paradise.(1)

We have already mentioned the *Hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that Paradise has one hundred grades and that the distance between every two grades is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth.

Imaam Ahmad recorded in his *Musnad* on the authority of 'Ubadah ibn Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"الْـجَنَّةُ مِائَةُ دَرَجَةٍ مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ مَسِيرَةُ مِائَةِ عَامٍ وَقَالَ عَفَّانُ: كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، وَالْفِرْدَوْسُ أَعْلَاهَا دَرَجَةً وَمِنْهَا تَخْرُجُ الْأَنْهَارُ الْأَرْبَعَةُ وَالْعَرْشُ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى فَاسْأَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ"

"Paradise has one hundred grades. Between every two grades is the distance of a hundred years journey. (Another sub-narrator said: the distance between every two grades is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth). *Firdaws* is the highest part of Paradise and it is from there that the four springs originate. Whenever you ask Allah (of Paradise), ask Him of *Firdaws*." (2)

At-Tirmidhi also recorded three authentic *Hadiths*. They are:

Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةُ دَرَجَةٍ، مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ مِائَةُ عَامٍ"

"There are one hundred grades in Paradise; between every two grades is the distance of a hundred years journey."

There is no contradiction between the wordings of the *Hadiths*. What is between every two grades is estimated in terms of distance (i.e. the distance between the heaven and the earth) and in terms of time (i.e. a hundred years journey).

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(1) *Al-Isti'hab* 2/110; *Usd Al-Ghabah* 2l480

(2) See: *Al-Kash-shaaf* 2/444

Mu'adh bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated:

“مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ وَصَلَّى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَحَجَّ الْبَيْتَ- لَا أَدْرِي أَذَكَرَ الزَّكَاةَ أَمْ لَا- إِلَّا كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَى اللهِ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لَهُ، إِنْ هَاجَرَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ أَوْ مَكَثَ بِأَرْضِهِ الَّتِي وُلِدَ بِهَا قَالَ مُعَاذٌ: أَلَا أُخْبِرُ بِهَذَا النَّاسَ ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ ذَرِ النَّاسَ يَعْمَلُونَ، فَإِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْفِرْدَوْسُ أَعْلَى الْـجَنَّةِ وَأَوْسَطُهَا وَفَوْقَ ذَلِكَ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ وَمِنْهَا تُفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْـجَنَّةِ فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ فَسَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ”

“He who observes fasting in the month of Ramadan, performs prayers and make pilgrimage to Allah's House (the narrator mentioned that he did not know whether the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, mentioned *Zakah* or not); Allah has taken it upon Himself to forgive him if he migrates in the cause of Allah from the land in which he was born.” Mu'adh, may Allah be pleased with him said to the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, “Shouldn't tell people this?” The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, answered, “Let the people go on working. For, there is in Paradise one hundred grades, the distance between every two grades is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth. *Firdaws* is the highest and the best part of Paradise. The Throne of the Merciful is over it; and it is from it that the springs of Paradise originate. If you are asking Allah of Paradise, ask Him of *Firdaws*.”

The third *Hadith* is the one narrated by Ubadah bin Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةُ دَرَجَةٍ مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْفِرْدَوْسُ أَعْلَاهَا دَرَجَةً وَمِنْهَا تُفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْأَرْبَعَةُ وَمِنْ فَوْقِهَا يَكُونُ الْعَرْشُ، فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ فَسَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ”

"Paradise has one hundred grades. Between every two grades is the distance of a hundred years journey. (Another sub-narrator said: the distance between every two grades is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth). *Firdaws* is the highest part of Paradise and it is from there that the four springs originate. Whenever you ask Allah (of Paradise), ask Him of *Firdaws*."

Earlier, we have mentioned the *Hadith* recorded by Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ يَتَرَاءَوْنَ أَهْلَ الْغُرَفِ كَمَا يَتَرَاءَوْنَ الْكَوْكَبَ الدُّرِّيَّ الْغَابِرَ فِي الْأُفُقِ، وَإِنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَأَنْعَمَا”

"The people of Paradise will look at the dwellers of the lofty mansions (i.e. a superior place in Paradise) in the same way as one looks at a brilliant star far away in the East or in the West on the horizon; and Abu Bakr and 'Umar would be among them and they would be among the most blessed there." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

Eight: Allah says in *Surah Al-Ahqaaf:*

﴿ وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوا۟ ۖ وَلِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ١٩ ﴾

"And for all, there will be degrees according to that which they did, that He (*Allah*) may recompense them in full for their deeds. And they will not be wronged." (Al-Ahqaaf 46:19)

This verse is absolutely related to the preceding verses. In those verses, Allah mentioned a believing son who is dutiful to his parents and then mentioned an undutiful son. He then mentioned that each of them would have different grades and positions on the Day of Resurrection in accordance with good and evil deeds they had done. And that He would recompense each of them accordingly. The people of Paradise would have different degrees and positions of *honor* and the dwellers of Hell would also live therein in varying depths. We seek Allah's refuge from Hell.(1)

Nine: Allah says in *Surah Al-Hadeed:*

﴿ وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَٰثُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ لَا يَسْتَوِى مِنكُم مَّنْ
أَنفَقَ مِن قَبْلِ ٱلْفَتْحِ وَقَٰتَلَ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنفَقُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدُ وَقَٰتَلُوا۟ ۚ
وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

"And what is the matter with you that you spend not in the Cause of Allah? And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquering (of Makkah, with those among you who did so later). Such are higher in degree than those who spent and fought afterwards. But to all Allah has promised the best (reward). And Allah is All-Aware of what you do." (Al-Hadeed 57:10)

The verse is strongly connected to the preceding verses in the same *Surah*. Allah enjoined His servants to believe in Him and to spend in His cause. He then emphasized the importance of faith followed by the importance of spending in the way of Allah.

The interrogative clause,

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(1) See: *Jami Al-Bayan* 9/16/190; *Maalim At-Tanzeel* 4/33; *Zad Al-Maseer* 5/309; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 5/299

﴿ وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنفِقُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ﴾

'And what is the matter with you that you spend not in the Cause of *Allah*?'(Al-Hadeed 57:10)

means: What is preventing you from spending in causes that can bring you close to Allah, while you are going to die and leave behind this wealth?!' So, the clause is a kind of reproof from Allah to those who fail to spend their wealth in His cause while there is a strong reason that.(1)

Thereafter, Allah informs us that to Him belongs the heritage of the heaven and earth. Everything will return to Allah by the extinction of the heavens and the earth as the heritage is given back to its rightful owner. If this is understood with certainty, then it should serve as the greatest urge unto spending in Allah's cause due to the enormous reward such an action entails.(2)

Allah then makes it clear that those who spent their wealth and fought in His cause before the Conquest of Makkah and those who did the same after the Conquest are not equal.

Therefore, the verse is an indication of the virtue of those who were forefront Muslims, spent their wealth in the way of Allah and fought in His cause before the Conquest of Makkah. Spending in the cause of Allah and *Jihad* before the Conquest are greater in reward because then the need for them at the time was greater. The Muslims were few in number and were weak in comparison to the polytheists who were far larger in number and were much stronger. Therefore, spending money in Allah's cause in a situation like this was more difficult, and the reward will be in accordance with the size of the difficulty faced. For, after the Conquest of Makkah, Islam had already prevailed and become stronger, and many people had embraced the religion in droves.(1)

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(1) See: *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 9/17/239 and *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 8/218

(2) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/27/221

The clause 'Such are higher in degree' refers to those who had the two great attributes: Spending in the way of Allah and spending in His cause before the Conquest of Makkah. They are better in Allah's estimation and greater in reward.

Allah then promised the two previous groups – those who spent and fought before the Conquest and those who did so afterwards – rewards, though there is a difference in their degrees in Paradise.

Ten: Allah says in *Surah* Al-Mujadilah:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمۡ تَفَسَّحُواْ فِي ٱلۡمَجَٰلِسِ فَٱفۡسَحُواْ يَفۡسَحِ ٱللَّهُ لَكُمۡۖ وَإِذَا قِيلَ ٱنشُزُواْ فَٱنشُزُواْ يَرۡفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنكُمۡ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡعِلۡمَ دَرَجَٰتٖۚ وَٱللَّهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ خَبِيرٞ ١١﴾

"O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allah will give you (ample) room (from His Mercy). And when you are told to rise up (for prayers, Jihaad (holy fighting in Allah's Cause), or for any other good deed), rise up. Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do." (Al-Mujadilah 58:11)

This verse is also strongly related to the preceding verses in the *Surah*. After Allah has forbidden causes of mutual hatred and aversion in the preceding verse, He now directs His servants to qualities that could lead to mutual love, harmony, compassion and rapprochement among members of the society that is bound together by Islam. He also teaches them etiquettes that could improve their situations in this world and the Hereafter.(2)

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/27/221; and *Al-Jami' li-Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 8/40

(2) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 29/268

This verse is an address and an instruction from Allah to His believing servants that they should make room for one another in gatherings whenever they are asked to do so and that they should abide by the commandment of their Gracious Lord that He may bless them in this world and the Hereafter.

Whoever opens gates of benefits for his Muslim brethren and makes things easy for them, Allah will open for him the benefits of this world and the Hereafter. Allah always helps His servant as long as the servant helps his brother in faith.

In the same verse, Allah teaches His servants another kind of etiquette. He says,

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ ٱنشُزُواْ فَٱنشُزُواْ﴾

"And when you are told to rise up; rise up".

This means: When you are invited to a good and righteous matter, respond to the call whether it is a call to prayer, *Jihad* or any other righteous deed.

After teaching His slaves these excellent manners, He then promises His believing servants who carry out His commands and those of His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, a great reward with His saying,

﴿يَرۡفَعِ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ مِنكُمۡ وَٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُواْ ٱلۡعِلۡمَ دَرَجَٰتٖۚ﴾

"Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge". (Al-Mujadilah 58:11)

He will firstly exalt those who believe on account of their faith and will then exalt those who have knowledge in degrees on account of the knowledge they possess in addition to their faith.

This exaltation will be in Paradise in form of great reward and high degrees; in this world, it will be in form of *honor*, fame and their teaching of people matters of their religion.(1)

Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of Katheer ibn Qays said: "I was sitting with Abu Darda, may Allah be pleased with him, in the mosque of Damascus. A man came to him and said, 'Abu Darda, I have come to you from the town of the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, for a *Hadith* that I have heard you relate from the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. I have come for no other purpose.' He said, 'I heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say:

” مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْـجَنَّةِ . وَإِنَّ
الْـمَلَائِكَةَ لَـتَضَعُ أَجْنِحَتَهَا رِضًا لِطَالِبِ الْعِلْمِ . وَإِنَّ طَالِبَ الْعِلْمِ يَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ مَنْ
فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ . حَتَّى الْحِيتَانُ فِي الْمَاءِ . وَإِنَّ فَضْلَ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ
الْقَمَرِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ . إِنَّ الْعُلَمَاءَ وَرَثَةُ الأَنْبِيَاءِ إِنَّ الأَنْبِيَاءَ لَمْ يُوَرِّثُوا دِينَارًا
وَلَا دِرْهَمًا . إِنَّمَا وَرَّثُوا الْعِلْمَ . فَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ أَخَذَ بِحَظٍّ وَافِرٍ “

"If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars. The learned are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither dinar nor dirham, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion.""

Muslim also recorded on the authority of 'Amir bin Wathilah who reported that Nafi' bin 'Abd al-Harith met 'Umar at 'Usfan and 'Umar had employed him as collector in Makkah. He ('Umar) said to him (Nafi'): Whom have you appointed as collector over the people of the valley? He said: Ibn Abzay. He said: Who is Ibn Abzay? He said: He is one of our freed slaves. He ('Umar) said: So you have appointed a freed slave over them. He said: He is well versed in the Book of Allah, the Exalted and Great, and he is well versed in the commandments and injunctions (of the *Shari'ah*). 'Umar said: (Then if that is the case) the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, had said:

” إِنَّ اللهَ يَرْفَعُ بِهَذَا الْكِتَابِ أَقْوَامًا وَيَضَعُ بِهِ آخَرِينَ “

"By this Book, Allah would exalt some peoples and degrade others."

There is also a verse that indicates that whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, will be admitted to Paradise in the company of the blessed servants of Allah. Allah says in *Surah An-Nisaa'*:

﴿وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ فَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ
وَٱلصِّدِّيقِينَ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَٱلصَّـٰلِحِينَ ۚ وَحَسُنَ أُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ رَفِيقًا ﴿٦٩﴾﴾

"And whoso obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqoon (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these Companions *are!"* (An-Nisaa' 4:69)

The above verse is closely connected to the verses that precede it in the same *Surah*. In one of the preceding verses, Allah says:

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 4/28/19; and *Zad Al-Maseer* 8/193

﴿ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَطِيعُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُواْ ٱلرَّسُولَ ﴾

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)]." (An-Nisaa' 4:59)

He then repeated the command to obey the Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, by saying:

﴿ وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَا مِن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذۡنِ ٱللَّهِ ﴾

"We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allah's Leave." (An-Nisaa' 4:64)

Allah then mentioned the matter which if it had been carried out by the hypocrites, He would have bestowed His favor upon them. That is after mentioning the reward of those who carry out His command by obeying Him and His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and showing interest in righteous deeds.(1)

In His *Tafseer*, At-Tabari mentioned the cause of revelation for this verse. He recorded on the authority of Sa'eed bin Jubair, may Allah have mercy upon him, who said: "A sad man from among the *Ansaar* came to the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. The Prophet, asked him,

"يَا فُلَانُ، مَالِي أَرَاكَ مَحْزُونًا؟"

'Why are you looking sad?'

The man answered, 'It is something I am thinking about.' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, inquired further,

"مَا هُوَ؟"

'What is it?'

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(1) See: *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 4/170; *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 10:169

The man said, 'We come to you and leave; we look at your face and keep your company. But tomorrow, you will be elevated in the company of the Prophets and then we will not be able to reach you?' The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, did not say anything until Angel Gabriel brought him this verse:

﴿ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ
وَٱلصِّدِّيقِينَ وَٱلشُّهَدَآءِ وَٱلصَّٰلِحِينَۚ وَحَسُنَ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ رَفِيقٗا ٦٩ ﴾

"And whoso obey Allah and the Messenger [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the Siddiqoon (those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost believed in them, like Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq (may Allah be pleased with him), the martyrs, and the righteous. And how excellent these Companions *are!"*

The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, then sent for the man and gave him glad tiding with the verse."(1)

At-Tabari also recorded on the authority of Masrooq who said: The Companions of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, once asked him, 'O Messenger of Allah, we should not leave your company in this world. But when you die, you will be elevated above us and then we will not be able to see you.' It was then that Allah revealed:

﴿ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مَعَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيۡهِم مِّنَ ٱلنَّبِيِّـۧنَ ﴾

"And whoso obey Allah and the Messenger [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets..."

What the verse means is that, whoever remains steadfast on

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(1) See: *Tafseer Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 8/534

Allah's path by carrying out His commands and abstaining from all that He has forbidden will be admitted to His abode of *honor* which is Paradise, in the company of the Prophets, the martyrs and the righteous by His grace.(1)

This is also supported by the *Hadith* that al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "The people of Paradise will look at the dwellers of the lofty mansions (i.e. a superior place in Paradise) in the same way as one looks at a brilliant star far away in the East or in the West on the horizon; all that is because of their superiority over one another (in rewards)." On that the people said, "O Allah's Messenger! Are these lofty mansions for the Prophets, which nobody else can reach?" The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, replied,

”بَلَى وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، رِجَالٌ آمَنُوا بِاللهِ وَصَدَّقُوا الْـمُرْسَلِينَ“

"No! By Allah, in whose Hands my life is, these are for the men who believed in Allah and also believed in the Messengers."(2)

The essence of this *Hadith* is that those high mansions will be attained by the Prophets and also by others who believed in Allah and believed in His Prophets.

Muslim recorded on the authority of Rabi'ah bin Ka'b Al-Aslami, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: I was with Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, one night and I brought him water and what he required. He said to me:

” سَلْ “

"Ask (anything you like)."

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(1) Ibid 8/530; see also: *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 2/103; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* by Ibn Katheer 2/309

(2) This is Al-Bukhari's versions. The *Hadith* is recorded in varying versions but with the same meaning by Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud, An-Nasaai and At-Tirmidhi

I said: "I ask your company in Paradise." He (the Prophet) said:

” أَوْ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ “

"Or anything else besides it."

I said: That is all (what I require). He said:

” فَأَعِنِّي عَلَى نَفْسِكَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ“

"Then help me to achieve this for you by devoting yourself often to prostration."

The message of this *Hadith* is that being in the company of Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, in Paradise – and the highest position there is the Prophet's – requires abiding by his command, which, in this *Hadith*, is performing much supererogatory prayers.

Muslim also recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

” كَافِلُ الْيَتِيمِ – لَهُ أَوْ لِغَيْرِهِ – أَنَا وَهُوَ كَهَاتَيْنِ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ “

"One who looks after the orphan whether he is his relative or not, I and he would be together in Paradise like this."

Malik (the sub-narrator) gestured by drawing his index finger and middle finger close together.

The most remarkable *Hadith* on this topic is the one recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that a person came to Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and said to him: "When would be the Last Hour?" The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, answered:

" وَمَا أَعْدَدْتَ لِلسَّاعَةِ؟ "

"What preparation have you made for the Last Hour?"

The man said: "The love of Allah and of His Messenger (is my only preparation)." Thereupon the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "You would be along with one whom you love." Anas said: Nothing pleased us more after accepting Islam than the words of Allah's Messenger:

" فَإِنَّكَ مَعَ مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ "

"You would be along with one whom you love."

And Anas said. "I love Allah and His Messenger and Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and I hope that I would be along with them although I have not acted like them."(1)

Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of Mu'adh ibn Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say: Allah, High and Exalted said,

" الْـمُتَحَابُّونَ فِي جَلَالِي، لَـهُمْ مَنَابِرُ مِنْ نُورٍ يَغْبِطُهُمُ النَّبِيُّونَ وَالشُّهَدَاءُ "

"Those who love one another for the sake of My Majesty shall have pulpits of light that will make the Prophets and the martyrs be envious of them."(2)

In the light of all that the texts in this section, it is clear to us that Allah, High and Exalted, mentioned in the noble Qur'an that Paradise consists of grades and that the righteous servants of Allah will be awarded different grades in Paradise, in accordance with the level of their faith and righteous deeds.

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(1) This is Muslim's version
(2) This is At-Tirmidhi's version

The above *Hadiths* also show that there are one hundred grades in Paradise and that the distance between every two grades is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth. There are also *Hadiths* that indicate that such difference is as far as the journey of a hundred years. The *Hadiths* clearly show that *Firdaws* is the highest and the best part of Paradise, and that the Throne of the Merciful Lord is above *Firdaws* and that it is from it that the springs of Paradise originate.

The least of the people of Paradise in grade shall have what is equivalent to this world and ten times its like.

As for the highest absolute position in Paradise, it is known as '*Al-Wasilah*' and it will be attained by only one servant of Allah who is the leader of the earlier and the latter generations of humans: Muhammad son of 'Abdullah, the Chosen one, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him.

Muslim, Ahmad and Abu Dawud recorded on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Al-'Aas, may Allah be pleased with him and his father, who narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say:

" إِذَا سَمِعْتُمُ الْـمُؤَذِّنَ، فَقُولُوا مِثْلَ مَا يَقُولُ ثُمَّ صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ صَلَاةً صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ بِهَا عَشْرًا، ثُمَّ سَلُوا اللهَ لِيَ الْوَسِيلَةَ فَإِنَّهَا مَنْزِلَةٌ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ لَا تَنْبَغِي إِلَّا لِعَبْدٍ مِنْ عِبَادِ اللهِ وَأَرْجُو أَنْ أَكُونَ أَنَا هُوَ، فَمَنْ سَأَلَ لِيَ الْوَسِيلَةَ حَلَّتْ لَهُ الشَّفَاعَةُ ".

"When you hear the Mu'adhdhin, repeat what he says, then invoke a blessing on me, for everyone who invokes a blessing on me will receive ten blessings from Allah; then beg from Allah *al-Wasilah* (Right of Intercession) for me, which is a rank in Paradise fitting for only one of Allah's servants, and I hope that I may be that one. If anyone who asks that I be given the *Wasilah*, he will be assured of my intercession." This is Muslim's version.

Ibn Al-Qayyim said: "Since the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, is the greatest of Allah's servants in terms of worship, the most knowledgeable of them concerning His Lord and the one who feared Allah and loved Him the most, it follows then that he should enjoy the closest position to Him, which is the highest degree in Paradise. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, requested from his followers to supplicate to Allah to grant him that position so that they can attain through this supplication, Allah's pleasure and increase in faith. Also, Allah has predestined this position for Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, through means among which is the supplication his followers make for him as a result of faith and guidance which they get through him, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,."(1)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p115

Chambers of Paradise

Mention is made of chambers of Paradise in the Qur'an. In this section, we are going to know about these chambers in the light of the relevant verses that I am going to cite.

One: Allah says in *Surah Al-Furqaan:*

﴿أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ ٱلْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُواْ وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلَٰمًا ﴿٧٥﴾﴾

"Those will be rewarded with the highest place (in Paradise) because of their patience. Therein they shall be met with greetings and the word of peace and respect." (Al-Furqaan 25:75)

This verse is closely related to the preceding verses in the *Surah*. In the preceding verses, Allah qualifies His truthful servants with excellent attributes such as humility, deliberateness, performance of night supererogatory prayers, fear of Him, lack of extravagance and stinginess, freedom from adultery, fornication and killing of (innocent) souls; repentance, abstention from lying, forgiving the wrongdoer, acceptance of the call of truth and showing helplessness to Allah through supplication. Allah then mentions, in the above-cited verse, their reward and what their Lord has in reserve for them.

Two: Allah says in *Surah* Az-Zumar:

﴿لَٰكِنِ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْاْ رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ مِّن فَوْقِهَا غُرَفٌ مَّبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ لَا يُخْلِفُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمِيعَادَ ﴿٢٠﴾﴾

"But those who fear their Lord (Allah) and keep their duty to Him, for them are built lofty rooms; one above another under which rivers flow (i.e. Paradise). (This is) the Promise of Allah: and Allah does not fail in (His) Promise." (Az-Zumar 39:20)

This verse is also closely related to the preceding verses in the same *Surah*. For, after informing us of the punishment He has reserved for the disbelievers, He then tells us about the reward of those who believed in Him and do righteous deeds.⁽¹⁾

In this verse, Allah informs us that His fortunate servants who fear their Lord, do what they are commanded to do, abstain from forbidden things will have chambers in Paradise one above another under which rivers flow.⁽²⁾

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'eedi, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ لَيَتَرَاءَوْنَ الْغُرَفَ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ ، كَمَا تَتَرَاءَوْنَ الْكَوْكَبَ فِي السَّمَاءِ"

"The people of Paradise will see the chambers in Paradise as you see a star in the sky."

Abu Sa'eed added:

"كَمَا تَتَرَاءَوْنَ الْكَوْكَبَ الْغَارِبَ فِي الأُفُقِ الشَّرْقِيِّ وَالْغَرْبِيِّ"

"As you see a glittering star remaining in the eastern horizon and the western horizon."

Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ لَغُرَفًا يُرَى ظُهُورُهَا مِنْ بُطُونِهَا وَبُطُونُهَا مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا ، فَقَامَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْرَابِيٌّ فَقَالَ: لِـمَنْ هِيَ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ ؟ قَالَ : هِيَ لِـمَنْ أَطَابَ الْكَلَامَ، وَأَطْعَمَ الطَّعَامَ وَأَدَامَ الصِّيَامَ وَصَلَّى للهِ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّاسُ نِيَامٌ"

"There are chambers in Paradise whose exterior will be seen from its interior and its interior will be seen from its exterior." One Bedouin Arab stood up and said, "Messenger of Allah, they are for whom?" The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, responded, "They are for those who speak pleasant words, feed the poor, constantly observe voluntary fasting and perform supererogatory night prayers while other people are asleep." (This is At-Tirmidhi's version)

Three: Allah says in *Surah Al-'Ankabut:*

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّـٰلِحَـٰتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم مِّنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ خَـٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ نِعْمَ أَجْرُ ٱلْعَـٰمِلِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾ ﴾

"And those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to them We shall surely give lofty dwellings in Paradise, underneath which rivers flow, to live therein forever. Excellent is the reward for the workers." (Al-'Ankabut 29:58)

In the verses, preceding the above verse, Allah mentions the punishment that awaits the disbelievers on the Day of Resurrection and that such punishment shall come to them from over their heads and from under their feet. He also mentions that the return of the creation shall be to Him alone. He then mentions what He has preserved for the believers who perform righteous deeds of chambers in Paradise underneath of which rivers flow.⁽¹⁾

The message of this verse is: Those who believed in Allah, High and Exalted, and believed in His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, concerning all that he brought to them from Allah, and acted in accordance with Allah's Law, and obeyed Him and refrain from all forbidden things, they shall be made to live in the high chambers of Paradise underneath which rivers flow. They will abide therein forever. How excellent the reward of those who obey Allah is!⁽²⁾

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(1) See: *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 8/15/245

(2) See: *Jami Al-Bayan* 12/23/208

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 25/85; *Al-Futuhat Al-Ilahiyyah* 3/381

(2) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 11/21/10; *Zad Al-Maseer* 6/282; *At-Tahreer wat-Ta - weer* 21/23

Four: Allah says in *Surah* Saba':

﴿وَمَآ أَمۡوَٰلُكُمۡ وَلَآ أَوۡلَٰدُكُم بِٱلَّتِي تُقَرِّبُكُمۡ عِندَنَا زُلۡفَىٰٓ إِلَّا مَنۡ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ
صَٰلِحٗا فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ جَزَآءُ ٱلضِّعۡفِ بِمَا عَمِلُواْ وَهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡغُرُفَٰتِ ءَامِنُونَ ٣٧﴾

"And it is not your wealth, nor your children that bring you nearer to Us (i.e. please Allah), but only he who believes (in the Islamic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds (will please Us); as for such, there will be twofold reward for what they did, and they will reside in the high dwellings (Paradise) in peace and security." (Saba' 34:37)

In the verses that precede the above verse, Allah mentions what the wealthy, the leaders and the tyrants from among the disbelievers told the Messengers sent to them. Those disbelieving leaders and tyrants claimed that they were greater in wealth and sons and that they could not be punished. The above verse, therefore, comes to refute and disprove that claim.

The verse means: Wealth and sons are not signs of Allah's love neither are they things that make you attain Allah's favor. There is no recognition for wealth or sons. For, a disbeliever may have wealth and children and believer may be deprived of the same. So, no one should think that that is good for the disbelievers. Rather, it is disadvantageous to them. This is made clear by Allah's statement:

﴿وَلَا يَحۡسَبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَنَّمَا نُمۡلِي لَهُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لِّأَنفُسِهِمۡۚ إِنَّمَا نُمۡلِي لَهُمۡ لِيَزۡدَادُوٓاْ
إِثۡمٗاۚ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٞ مُّهِينٞ ١٧٨﴾

"And let not the disbelievers think that Our postponing of their punishment is good for them. We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness. And for them is a disgracing torment." (Aal 'Imraan 3:178)

Wealth and children do not make a person win any favor with Allah. It is rather faith and righteous deed that bring man close to Allah. It is those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and abide by the injunctions of Islam that will have multiple rewards in this world; a righteous deed would be multiplied by ten up to seven hundred times. Allah will give them high positions in Paradise and provide them security against any harm. They will not know death, disease, grief or fear. They will forever abide in eternal bliss and delight.(1)

Section Summary:

The chambers(2) of Paradise is mentioned in the Qur'an. These chambers have other chambers above them. They are also described as having rivers flowing from under them. In the *Sunnah*, these chambers are described to be high like stars in the heaven and that their interior is seen from their exterior, and their exterior is seen from their interior.

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(1) See: *Tafseer Mujahid* 2/528; *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/22/100; *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 25/262; and *Al-Jami' li-Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 7/14/306

(2) It is also translated as 'rooms'.

Dwellings of Paradise

The dwelling of the blissful Paradise is mention in two verses:

The First Verse: In *Surah* At-Tawbah, Allah says:

﴿وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ
ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

"Allah has promised to the believers - men and women, - Gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of 'Adn (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:72)

The above verse explains in detail what is mentioned in general terms in the previous verse, which is Allah's statement:

﴿وَٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥٓ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ ٱللَّهُ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾﴾

"The believers, men and women, are Auliyâ' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'roof (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); they

perform As-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat) and give the Zakaat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise." (At-Tawbah 9:71)

This mercy mentioned in general term in this latter verse is clearly explained in the earlier-mentioned verse. It is Gardens underneath of which rivers flow and the pleasant dwellings; but Allah's pleasure is greater than all that.(1)

The meaning of the verse is: Allah, High and Exalted, promised the faithful men and women who believe in Allah and His Messenger, affirm Allah's exclusive right to be worshiped and Muhammad's messengership and act upon what the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, brought from his Lord; Allah promised them Gardens from underneath of which rivers flow. They will abide therein forever in everlasting bliss. Allah describes these dwellings as pleasant. It was pleasantly-built and it is a pleasant abode. Its dwellers are also going to have a pleasant stay there. For, it contains the desires of the souls of beauties and provisions that give its residents perfect comfort and happiness.(2)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'ari, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

" جَنَّتَانِ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا ، وَجَنَّتَانِ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا ، وَمَا بَيْنَ
الْقَوْمِ وَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا رِدَاءُ الْكِبْرِيَاءِ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ ، فِي جَنَّةِ عَدْنٍ ".

"There would be two gardens (in Paradise) the vessels and contents of which would be of silver, and two gardens whose vessels and contents would be of gold. The only thing intervening to hinder the people from looking at their Lord will be the mantle of Grandeur over His face in the Garden of Eden." (The version is Muslim's)

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 16/132; and *Tafseer Al-Manaar* 10/544

(2) See: *Tafseer Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 14/348; *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 4/115; and *Tafseer Al-Manaar* 10/554

These pleasant dwellings are in the Gardens of Eden, which are the everlasting gardens, from which no dweller would ever be expelled.

Allah, Blessed is He, also promised His righteous servants – males and females – His pleasure; and His pleasure will be far greater than whatever they could find themselves in of delight.

This is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

" إِنَّ اللهَ يَقُولُ لِأَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ :يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ، فَيَقُولُونَ: لَبَّيْكَ وَسَعْدَيْكَ وَالْـخَيْرُ فِي يَدَيْكَ ، فَيَقُولُ: هَلْ رَضِيتُمْ ؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: وَمَا لَـنَا لَا نَرْضَى يَا رَبِّ؟ وَقَدْ أَعْطَيْتَنَا مَالَمْ تُعْطِ أَحَدًا مِنْ خَلْقِكَ فَيَقُولُ: أَ لَا أُعْطِيكُمْ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ ؟ فَيَقُولُونَ : يَا رَبِّ وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: أُحِلُّ عَلَيْكُمْ رِضْوَانِي، فَلَا أَسْخَطُ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْدَهُ أَبَدًا "

"Allah will say to the people of Paradise, 'O the people of Paradise!' They will say, At Your service and pleasure, our Lord, the good is in Your Hand!' Allah will say, 'Are you pleased?" They will say, 'Why should we not be pleased since You have given us what You have not given to anyone of Your creation?' Allah will say, 'I will give you something better than that.' They will reply, 'O our Lord! And what is better than that?' Allah will say, 'I will bestow My pleasure and contentment upon you so that I will never be angry with you after for-ever.'"

It will be noticed that the *Hadith* is perfectly in consonance with the verse that Allah's pleasure will be greater for the people of Paradise than the bliss in which they are. This is because; the delight of the heart with the Lord's pleasure is a bliss that is exclusive with the heart and the delight of the heart is undoubtedly greater and sweeter than the delight of food, drink and shelter.(1)

Allah then concludes the noble verse with the statement,

﴿ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ٧٢﴾

"That is the supreme success".

The real success is to be safe from Hell-Fire. Allah says:

﴿فَمَن زُحۡزِحَ عَنِ ٱلنَّارِ وَأُدۡخِلَ ٱلۡجَنَّةَ فَقَدۡ فَازَۗ﴾

"And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful." (Aal 'Imraan 3:185)

This verse means: These things that Allah promised the believing men and women are the greatest success. All those who are admitted to Paradise will be satisfied though their grades and positions may vary. Each of them will see himself as the happiest one in Paradise. We beseech Allah to bless us out of His infinite mercy.

The Second Verse: Allah says in *Surah As-Saff:*

﴿يَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡ ذُنُوبَكُمۡ وَيُدۡخِلۡكُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةٗ فِي جَنَّٰتِ عَدۡنٖۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ١٢﴾

"(If you do so) He will forgive you your sins, and admit you

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(1) See: *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 8/231; and *Zad Al-Maseer* 3/469

into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwelling in Gardens of 'Adn (Eden) Paradise; that is indeed the great success." (As-Saff 61:12)

This verse is related to the preceding verses in the same *Surah*. It is an explanation of what is mentioned in general term in the preceding verse. The verse that precedes it has a clause

﴿ذَٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٞ لَّكُمۡ﴾

'That is good for you.' (As-Saff 61:11)

So, in this verse, Allah explains the meaning of that goodness that it includes Allah's forgiveness for His righteous servants and admitting them to Paradise and the pleasant dwellings. The verse also explains the great profit that results from the bargain that the believers had with Allah by their believing in Him and His Messenger and striving in His cause with their souls and wealth. Then what profit is greater than this? If a merchant who invested with one dirham and gained a profit of ten dirhams is envied by his co-merchants, then what about a person who engaged in commerce for few days and gained, as a profit, eternal life in the everlasting abode of bliss?!(1)

The verse means: If the servants do what Allah directs them to do such as believing in Him and His Messenger, and striving in His cause with their souls and wealth; He will forgive their misdeeds, overlook their sins and admit them to Gardens underneath which rivers flow. Not only that, He will also make them live in pleasant dwellings – pleasant in that it has all pleasant things one could think of or imagine.

Paradise also has pleasant things that are beyond the

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(1) See: *See At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 29/317; and *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* 6/28/3559

description or imagination of any human being. Humans can only properly fathom the essence of this pleasantness when they are admitted to Paradise. Glory be to Allah, Who created Paradise and created therein what overwhelms the human minds. Were humans able to cast a look at Paradise and what is there; they would certainly never enjoy anything in this transient world whose enjoyment is mixed with pain and whose happiness is mixed with sorrow.

In *Surah At-Tahreem*, Allah says:

﴿وَضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلٗا لِّلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱمۡرَأَتَ فِرۡعَوۡنَ إِذۡ قَالَتۡ رَبِّ
ٱبۡنِ لِي عِندَكَ بَيۡتٗا فِي ٱلۡجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِن فِرۡعَوۡنَ وَعَمَلِهِۦ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ
ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ١١﴾

"And Allah has set forth an example for those who believe: the wife of Fir'aun (Pharaoh), when she said: "My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Paradise, and save me from Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and his work, and save me from the people who are Zaalimoon (polytheists, wrong-doers and disbelievers in Allah)." (At-Tahreem 66:11)

The relationship between this verse and the verses that precede it in the same *Surah* is very clear.

In the preceding verse, Allah sets forth an example for the disbelievers and in this verse, He sets forth another example for the believers so that the goal of the two examples can manifest together and the concepts of threatening and exhortation will follow one another. The goal of this parable is to exhort the believers to hold fast unto their obedience to Allah and to remain steadfast in times of ease and difficulty.(1)

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(1) See: *Al-Jami li Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 9/18/203; and *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 28/376

Meaning of the verse: Allah, High and Exalted, cites an example for the faithful who believe in Him and in His Oneness. The example is Asiyah wife of Pharaoh, may Allah be pleased with her, who believed in Allah and in His Messenger Moosaa, peace be upon him. She also believed in resurrection after death and in the Last Day. She supplicated to Allah to build for her a house in Paradise; she also asked Allah to save her from Pharaoh – her husband – who was the most oppressive person on the face of the earth then and the farthest of all humans from Allah. She equally sought Allah's protection from doing the deed of Pharaoh, which is disbelief in Allah. And she beseeched Him to save her from a people who disbelieved in their Lord and were ungrateful to Him; and to grant her protection against their torment.

The message in this example is that a believer's relationship with a disbeliever will not harm in the least as long as he disagrees with him in his disbelief. The sinfulness of a person will not affect a pious believer in the Hereafter; though he may be adversely affected by the same in this world through the punishment that may encompass the inhabitants of the earth if they are neglectful of Allah's command. Therefore, Pharaoh's wife is not affected by her relationship with him, though he is one of the worst disbelievers.[1]

It is of Allah's way concerning His servants that He does not hold any of them responsible for the sin committed by another. Allah says:

﴿وَلَا تَكۡسِبُ كُلُّ نَفۡسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيۡهَاۚ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٞ وِزۡرَ أُخۡرَىٰۚ﴾

"No person earns any (sin) except against himself (only), and no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another." (Al-An'am 6:164)

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[1] See: *I'lam Al-Muwaqqi'in* 1/189

He also says:

﴿مَّنۡ عَمِلَ صَٰلِحٗا فَلِنَفۡسِهِۦۖ وَمَنۡ أَسَآءَ فَعَلَيۡهَاۗ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّٰمٖ لِّلۡعَبِيدِ ٤٦﴾

"Whosoever does righteous good deed, it is for (the benefit of) his own self; and whosoever does evil, it is against his own self. And your Lord is not at all unjust to (His) slaves." (Fussilat 41:46)

In another place in the Qur'an, He says:

﴿كُلُّ نَفۡسِۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتۡ رَهِينَةٌ ٣٨﴾

"Every person is a pledge for what he has earned." (Al-Muddath-thir 74:38)

In view of this, Asiyah, may Allah be pleased with her, was not affected in the least by her relationship with the tyrant Pharaoh. For, she will be in the blissful Paradise while he will live forever in the Hell-Fire.

Asiyah firstly asked the Lord of *Honor* and Majesty for His favor, for that is the most important thing to her. She then stipulated the kind of favor she wanted by saying,

﴿فِي ٱلۡجَنَّةِ﴾

'in Paradise'

, thereby selecting a neighbour before a dwelling.[1]

Allah has indeed answered her supplication. Al-Hakim recorded on the authority of Salman Al-Farisi, may Allah be pleased with him, who said:

"كَانَتِ إِمْرَأَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ تُعَذَّبُ بِالشَّمْسِ ، فَإِذَا انْصَرَفُوا عَنْهَا أَظَلَّتْهَا الْـمَلَائِكَةُ بِأَجْنِحَتِهَا، وَ كَانَتْ تَرَى بَيْتَهَا فِي الْـجَنَّةِ"

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[1] See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 30/50; *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 8/294; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 8/199

"Pharaoh's wife used to be punished with scorching sun and whenever her tormentors would depart, the angels would overshadow her with their wings and she would then be shown her house in Paradise."

As Allah has *honor*ed Asiyah with a house in Paradise, He has also *honor*ed Khadijah, may Allah be pleased with her, the Prophet's wife with a house in Paradise. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated:

"أَتَى جِبْرِيلُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ هَذِهِ خَدِيجَةُ قَدْ أَتَتْ
مَعَهَا إِنَاءٌ فِيهِ إِدَامٌ أَوْ طَعَامٌ أَوْ شَرَابٌ فَإِذَا هِيَ أَتَتْكَ فَاقْرَأْ عَلَيْهَا السَّلَامَ مِنْ رَبِّهَا
وَمِنِّي وَبَشِّرْهَا بِبَيْتٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ مِنْ قَصَبٍ لَا صَخَبَ فِيهِ وَلَا نَصَبَ"

Gabriel came to the Prophet and said, " O Allah's Messenger! This is Khadijah coming to you with a dish having meat soup (or some food or drink). When she reaches you, greet her on behalf of her Lord (i.e. Allah) and on my behalf, and give her the glad tidings of having a palace made of brocade in Paradise wherein there will be neither any noise nor any fatigue (trouble)." (The version is Al-Bukhari's)

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Rivers of Paradise

The Qur'an mentions flowing of rivers in Paradise in many verses among which are the following:

﴿ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا
ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى رُزِقْنَا مِن قَبْلُ ۖ
وَأُتُوا۟ بِهِۦ مُتَشَٰبِهًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَآ أَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾

"And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say: "This is what we were provided with before," and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste) and they shall have therein Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives) and they will abide therein forever." (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

﴿ قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُم بِخَيْرٍ مِّن ذَٰلِكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

"Say: " Shall I inform you of things far better than those? For Al-Muttaqoon (the pious - see V.2:2) there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home) and Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives). And Allah will be pleased with them. And Allah is All-Seer of the (His) slaves"." (Aal 'Imraan 3:15)

﴿فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّى لَآ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَٰمِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ
بَعْضُكُم مِّنۢ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا۟ وَأُخْرِجُوا۟ مِن دِيَٰرِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِى
وَقَٰتَلُوا۟ وَقُتِلُوا۟ لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ عِندَهُۥ حُسْنُ ٱلثَّوَابِ ﴿١٩٥﴾﴾

"So their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), " Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My Cause, and who fought, and were killed (in My Cause), verily, I will expiate from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards." " (Aal 'Imraan 3:195)

﴿تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ
تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ
ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

"These are the limits (set by) Allah (or ordainments as regards laws of inheritance), and whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad (peace be upon him)) will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and that will be the great success." (An-Nisaa' 4:13)

﴿۞ وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ ٱللَّهُ مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ ٱثْنَىْ عَشَرَ
نَقِيبًا ۖ وَقَالَ ٱللَّهُ إِنِّى مَعَكُمْ ۖ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَيْتُمُ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ
وَءَامَنتُم بِرُسُلِى وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ ٱللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَّأُكَفِّرَنَّ
عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۚ فَمَن
كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ مِنكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

"Indeed Allah took the covenant from the Children of Israel (Jews), and We appointed twelve leaders among them. And Allah said: ' I am with you if you perform As-Salaat (Iqaamat-as-Salaat) and give Zakaat and believe in My Messengers; honor and assist them, and lend a good loan to Allah, verily, I will expiate your sins and admit you to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise). But if any of you after this, disbelieved, he has indeed gone astray from the Straight Path.' " (Al-Ma'idah 5:12)

﴿وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

"Allah has promised to the believers - men and women, - Gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of 'Adn (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:72)

﴿مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ أُكُلُهَا دَآئِمٌ
وَظِلُّهَا ۚ تِلْكَ عُقْبَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟ ۖ وَّعُقْبَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ٱلنَّارُ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾

"The description of the Paradise which the Muttaqoon (pious - see V.2:2) have been promised! Underneath it rivers flow, its provision is eternal and so is its shade; this is the end (final destination) of the Muttaqoon (the pious - see V.2:2), and the end (final destination) of the disbelievers is Fire." (Ar-Ra'd 13:35)

﴿إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ
وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ ٱلْأَنْعَٰمُ وَٱلنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ﴿١٢﴾﴾

"Certainly! Allah will admit those who believe (in the Oneness

of Allah or Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), while those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as cattle eat; and the Fire will be their abode." (Muhammad 47:12)

﴿لَّيْسَ عَلَى ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى ٱلْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ ۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ
وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ١٧﴾

"No blame or sin is there upon the blind, nor is there blame or sin upon the lame, nor is there blame or sin upon the sick (that they go not for fighting). And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] He will admit him to Gardens beneath which rivers flow (Paradise); and whosoever turns back, He will punish him with a painful torment." (Al-Fat'h 48:17)

﴿لَّا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِٱللَّهِ وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ يُوَآدُّونَ مَنْ حَآدَّ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ
وَلَوْ كَانُوٓا۟ ءَابَآءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَٰنَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ
كَتَبَ فِى قُلُوبِهِمُ ٱلْإِيمَٰنَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ رَضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ
ٱللَّهِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ ٱللَّهِ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ٢٢﴾

"You (O Muhammad (peace be upon him)) will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] even though they were their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred (people). For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with Rooh *(proofs, light and true guidance) from Himself. And He will admit them to Gardens (Paradise) under which rivers flow to dwell therein (forever). Allah is pleased with them, and they with Him. They are the Party of Allah. Verily, it is the Party of Allah that will be the successful."* (Al-Mujadilah 58:22)

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ تُوبُوٓا۟ إِلَى ٱللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ
سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِى ٱللَّهُ
ٱلنَّبِىَّ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَعَهُۥ ۖ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَٰنِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ
أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ٨﴾

"O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will expiate from you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise) - the Day that Allah will not disgrace the Prophet [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] and those who believe with him. Their Light will run forward before them and (with their Records - Books of deeds) in their right hands. They will say: "Our Lord! Keep perfect our Light for us (and do not put it off till we cross over the Siraat [a slippery bridge over the Hell) safely] and grant us forgiveness. Verily, You are Able to do all things.'" (At-Tahreem 66:8)

Allah mentions that rivers will flow beneath the dwellers of Paradise in three verses of the Qur'an. They are:

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ وَقَالُوا۟ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى
هَدَىٰنَا لِهَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِىَ لَوْلَآ أَنْ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُ ۖ لَقَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۖ وَنُودُوٓا۟
أَن تِلْكُمُ ٱلْجَنَّةُ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ٤٣﴾

"And We shall remove from their breasts any (mutual) hatred or sense of injury (which they had, if at all, in the life of this world); rivers flowing under them, and they will say: ' All the praises and

thanks be to Allah, Who has guided us to this, and never could we have found guidance, were it not that Allah had guided us! Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth.' And it will be cried out to them: 'This is the Paradise which you have inherited for what you used to do.'" (Al-A 'raaf 7:43)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ يَهۡدِيهِمۡ رَبُّهُم بِإِيمَٰنِهِمۡۖ تَجۡرِي
مِن تَحۡتِهِمُ ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ فِي جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ (٩) ﴾

"Verily, those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, their Lord will guide them through their Faith; under them will flow rivers in the Gardens of delight (Paradise)." (Yunus 10:9)

﴿ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهِمُ ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوۡنَ فِيهَا مِنۡ أَسَاوِرَ مِن
ذَهَبٖ وَيَلۡبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضۡرٗا مِّن سُندُسٖ وَإِسۡتَبۡرَقٖ مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلۡأَرَآئِكِۚ نِعۡمَ
ٱلثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتۡ مُرۡتَفَقٗا (٣١) ﴾

"These! For them will be 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them; therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafaq (dwelling, resting place.)!" (Al-Kahf 18:31)

Some scholars say: The flowing of water under the Gardens does not mean that water flows under its earth because if it is so, then the water will not be seen by naked eyes.(1)

This opinion is contestable. The apparent meaning of the text (of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*) should be adhered to. Flowing of the water under the earth of Paradise does not necessarily

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(1) See: *Tafseer Tabari*, edited by Mahmud Shakir 1/384; *Ma'lim At-Tanzeel* 1/54; *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 1/1473; *Zad Al-Maseer* 1/52; and *Hadi Al-Arwah* p239

mean that it could not be seen. Such phenomenon would rather be regarded as part of the delight of Paradise. Allah informs us about the Queen of Sheba Bilqis that when she was told to enter the Prophet Sulayman's palace, which has a glass surface with water underneath, she thought the surface was a body of water (because the floor was transparent and beneath it was flowing water) and she uncovered her legs to wade through. She was told that it was a palace whose floor is made smooth with glass.(1)

Allah says:

﴿ قِيلَ لَهَا ٱدۡخُلِي ٱلصَّرۡحَۖ فَلَمَّا رَأَتۡهُ حَسِبَتۡهُ لُجَّةٗ وَكَشَفَتۡ عَن سَاقَيۡهَاۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُۥ صَرۡحٞ
مُّمَرَّدٞ مِّن قَوَارِيرَ ﴾

"It was said to her: " Enter *As-Sarh*" (a glass surface with water underneath it or a palace): but when she saw it, she thought it was a pool, and she (tucked up her clothes) uncovering her legs. [Sulaimaan (Solomon)] said:' Verily it is a *sarh*.' She said: " My Lord! Verily, I have wronged myself, and I submit [in Islam, together with Sulaimaan (Solomon)] to Allah, the Lord of the *'Alameen* (mankind, jinn and all that exists).' " (An-Naml 27:44)

Today, we hear of glass houses and even glass palaces built under water, and fishes and other sea creatures are seen through the glass surface. How then should anyone dispute the flowing of water under the surface of Paradise? Therefore, adhering to the text of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* is better than attempting to explain it away that the water only flows beneath trees and plants of Paradise and not beneath its earth.

In the previous three verses, Allah mentions that rivers will flow under the dwellers of Paradise. The people of Paradise – in their high positions, chambers and palaces, sitting down on their high couches while rivers will flow beneath them in their gardens

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(1) See: *Aysar At-Tafaseer* by Al-Jazairi 3/357

– will increase them in eternal and pure happiness and delight.

Allah mentions in the Qur'an that rivers also do flow beneath the people of this world. He says:

﴿أَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّن قَرْنٍ مَّكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّن لَّكُمْ وَأَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْهِم مِّدْرَارًا وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَنْهَارَ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهِمْ﴾

"Have they not seen how many a generation before them We have destroyed whom We had established on the earth such as We have not established you? And We poured out on them rain from the sky in abundance, and made the rivers flow under them." (Al-An'am 6:6)

Also, there is nothing preventing water from flowing practically from beneath them and from beneath their dwellings, palaces and rooms. It has been mentioned in a previously-quoted authentic *Hadith* that chambers of Paradise are transparent that their interior is seen from the exterior and their exterior is seen from the interior. All this is part of the delight of Paradise.

Rivers of Paradise are described in many verses as flowing. Some scholars are of the view that the rivers flow without channels. Masrooq said: "Rivers of Paradise flow without channels. Its fruits are as big as pitchers. Whenever a fruit is plucked, another fruit grows in its place; and a single bunch of its fruits is as big as 12 cubits in size."(1)

Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهَرٍ ٥٤﴾

"Verily, The Muttaqoon (the pious - See V.2:2), will be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers (Paradise)." (Al-Qamar 5f4:54)

This verse means: Those who put a demarcation between

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(1) *Sifah al-Jannah* by Abu Nu'aim 2/167

themselves and Allah's punishment by obeying Him, performing things He has made obligatory upon them and abstaining from things He has forbidden shall have numerous gardens and rivers.

The Greatest of the Rivers of Paradise:

The greatest of the rivers of Paradise is *'Al-Kawthar'*. A whole *Surah* of the Qur'an is named after it. This *Surah* is so great and so abundant in benefits in spite of its brevity.(1)

Allah says, at the beginning of the *Surah*:

﴿إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ١﴾

"Verily, We have granted you [O Muhammad (peace be upon him)] Al-Kawthar (a river in Paradise)." (Al-*Kawthar* 108:1)

The word, *'Kawthar'*, linguistically means multitude of something. Some scholars say: The meaning of *'Kawthar'* in the verse is abundant goodness. However, there are many authentic *Hadiths* that indicate that *Al-Kawthar* is the name of a river that Allah has endowed His Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, with.(2)

There is no contradiction between the two opinions because the river is a manifestation of the goodness. However, since the particularization has been established through the authentic sayings of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, it is improper to abandon it for the sayings of others.

Imaam Ahmad, Muslim, Abu Dawud and An-Nasai recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated: One day the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was sitting amongst us that he dozed off. He then raised his head smilingly. We said: "What makes you smile, Messenger of Allah?" He said:

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(1) See: *Majmu al-Fataawa* 16/526

(2) See: *Tafseer Mujahid* 2/789; *Ma'ani Al-Qur'an Al-Kareem* by Al-Farra' 3/296; *Gharib Al-Qur'an* by Al-Yazeedi p444; and At-*Tasheel li 'Ulum At-Tanzeel* by al-Gharnati 4/436

A *Surah* has just been revealed to me, and then recited:

" أُنْزِلَتْ عَلَيَّ آنِفًا سُورَةٌ . فَقَرَأَ بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿ إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ (١) فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ (٢) إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الأَبْتَرُ ﴾. ثُمَّ قَالَ " أَتَدْرُونَ مَا الْكَوْثَرُ " . فَقُلْنَا: اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ. قَالَ: " فَإِنَّهُ نَهْرٌ وَعَدَنِيهِ رَبِّي عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَيْهِ خَيْرٌ كَثِيرٌ هُوَ حَوْضٌ تَرِدُ عَلَيْهِ أُمَّتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ آنِيَتُهُ عَدَدُ النُّجُومِ فَيُخْتَلَجُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْهُمْ فَأَقُولُ: رَبِّ إِنَّهُ مِنْ أُمَّتِي. فَيَقُولُ: مَا تَدْرِى مَا أَحْدَثُوا بَعْدَكَ " .

Verily, We have granted you [O Muhammad (peace be upon him)] Al-Kawthar (a river in Paradise). Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice (to Him only). For he who hates you (O Muhammad [peace be upon him)] he will be cut off (from every good thing in this world and in the Hereafter).

The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, then said: "Do you know what *Kawthar* is?" We said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." He said: It is a river which my Lord, the Exalted and Glorious has promised me, and there is an abundance of good in it. It is a cistern and my people would come to it on the Day of Resurrection, and tumblers there would be equal to the number of stars. A servant would be turned away from (among the people gathered there). Upon this I would say: My Lord, he is one of my people, and He (the Lord) would say: You do not know that he innovated new things (in Islam) after you." (This is Muslim's version)

In this *Hadith*, it may inadvertently be understood that *Kawthar* is a cistern. But this is not so. What is correct is that *Kawthar* is a river in Paradise as indicated in the *Hadith* itself. Other authentic *Hadiths* that will explain this will be mentioned in the coming pages, *Insha Allah.*

As for the cistern, it is situated outside Paradise;[1] but its water is drawn from Paradise. This is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by Muslim on the authority of Thawban, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about the drink of the cistern and he said:

"أَشَدُّ بَيَاضًا مِنَ اللَّبَنِ وَأَحْلَى مِنَ الْعَسَلِ، يَغُتُّ فِيهِ مِيزَابَانِ يَمُدَّانِهِ مِنَ الْـجَنَّةِ أَحَدُهُمَا مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَالآخَرُ مِنْ وَرِقٍ " .

"It is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. There would spout into it two streamlets having their sources in Paradise. The one is from gold and the other is from silver."

Another proof is the *Hadith* recorded by Muslim on the authority of Abu Dharr, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, when he was asked about cistern:

"يَشْخَبُ فِيهِ مِيزَابَانِ مِنَ الْـجَنَّةِ"

" There would flow in it two spouts from Paradise."

Other proofs that *Kawthar* is a river in Paradise is the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated: When the Prophet was made to ascend to the Heavens, he said (after his return),

"أَتَيْتُ عَلَى نَهَرٍ حَافَتَاهُ قِبَابُ اللُّؤْلُؤِ مُجَوَّفًا فَقُلْتُ: مَا هَذَا يَا جِبْرِيلُ ؟ قَالَ: هَذَا الْكَوْثَرُ"

"I came upon a river the banks of which were made of tents of hollow pearls. I asked Gabriel. What is this (river?' He replied, 'This is the *Kawthar*'."

Another proof is the *Hadith* by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu 'Ubaydah, may Allah be pleased with him, who said: I asked 'Aishah regarding the verse: *'Verily we have granted you the*

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(1) See: *Fath Al-Bari* 11/466

Kawthar.' She replied,

"نَهَرٌ أُعْطِيَهُ نَبِيُّكُمْ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، شَاطِئَاهُ عَلَيْهِ دُرٌّ مُجَوَّفٌ، آنِيَتُهُ كَعَدَدِ النُّجُومِ"

"*The Kawthar* is a river which has been given to your Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, on the banks of which there are (tents of) hollow pearls and its utensils are as numberless as the stars."

He also recorded on the authority of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him- that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"بَيْنَمَا أَنَا أَسِيرُ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ إِذَا أَنَا بِنَهَرٍ حَافَتَاهُ قِبَابُ الدُّرِّ الْـمُجَوَّفِ قُلْتُ: مَا هَذَا يَا جِبْرِيلُ؟ قَالَ: هَذَا الْكَوْثَرُ الَّذِي أَعْطَاكَ رَبُّكَ فَإِذَا طِينُهُ أَوْ طِيبُهُ مِسْكٌ أَذْفَرُ"

"While I was walking in Paradise (on the night of Mi'raj), I saw a river, on the two banks of which there were tents made of hollow pearls. I asked, " What is this, O Gabriel?' He said, 'That is the *Kawthar* which Your Lord has given to you.' Behold! Its scent or its mud was sharp smelling musk!"

He also recorded on the authority of *Anas bin* Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, in the long *Hadith* on the Prophet's journey (from the Sacred Mosque in Makkah to Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and from there to the Heaven) that he saw two flowing rivers, while he was in the nearest sky. He asked,

"مَا هَذَانِ النَّهَرَانِ يَا جِبْرِيلُ؟"

"What are these two rivers, O Gabriel?"

Gabriel said, "These are the sources of the Nile and the Euphrates." Then Gabriel took him around that Heaven and behold, he saw another river at the bank of which there was a palace built of pearls and emerald. He put his hand into the river and found its mud like *Adhfar* musk. He asked,

"مَا هَذَا يَا جِبْرِيلُ؟"

"What is this, O Gabriel?"

Gabriel said, "This is the *Kawthar* which your Lord has kept for you."

What is directly understood from this *Hadith* is that there are other rivers beside *Kawthar*. This is substantiated by a *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari, Muslim and An-Nasai on the authority of Anas bin Malik from Malik ibn Sa'sa', may Allah be pleased with both of them – in a long *Hadith* that he narrated part of which goes thus:

"وَرُفِعَتْ لِي سِدْرَةُ الْـمُنْتَهَى فَإِذَا نَبِقُهَا كَأَنَّهُ قِلَالُ هَجَرَ، وَوَرَقُهَا كَأَنَّهُ آذَانُ الْفُيُولِ، فِي أَصْلِهَا أَرْبَعَةُ أَنْهَارٍ: نَهْرَانِ بَاطِنَانِ وَنَهْرَانِ ظَاهِرَانِ، فَسَأَلْتُ جِبْرِيلَ فَقَالَ: أَمَّا الْبَاطِنَانِ فَفِي الْـجَنَّةِ وَأَمَّا الظَّاهِرَانِ فَالنِّيلُ وَالْفُرَاتُ"

"Then I was shown *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* (i.e. a tree in the seventh heaven) and I saw its *Nabk* fruits which resembled the clay jugs of Hajr (i.e. a town in Arabia), and its leaves were like the ears of elephants, and four rivers originated at its root, two of them were apparent and two were hidden. I asked Gabriel about those rivers and he said, 'The two hidden rivers are in Paradise, and the apparent ones are the Nile and the Euphrates." (This is Al-Bukhari's version)

Ahmad and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"سَيْحَانُ وَجَيْحَانُ وَالْفُرَاتُ وَالنِّيلُ، كُلٌّ مِنْ أَنْهَارِ الْـجَنَّةِ".

"Saihan, Jaihan, Euphrates and Nile are all among the rivers of Paradise."

Therefore, *Kawthar* is one of the rivers of Paradise and the greatest of them all, according to Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, for, it is a great gift that comes from the Greatest Benefactor. If the least of the dwellers of Paradise in enjoyment would have what is equivalent to wealth of this world and ten times as much, one could imagine what the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, would have.(1)

The source of the rivers of Paradise is not mentioned in the Qur'an. It is only mentioned in the *Sunnah*. In the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

«إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ أَعَدَّهَا اللهُ لِلْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ ، مَا بَيْنَ الدَّرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ، فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ فَاسْأَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ ، فَإِنَّهُ أَوْسَطُ الْـجَنَّةِ وَأَعْلَى الْـجَنَّةِ - أُرَاهُ قَالَ:- وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْـجَنَّةِ“

“Paradise has one-hundred grades which Allah has reserved for the *Mujahideen* who fight in His Cause, and the distance between each of two grades is like the distance between the Heaven and the Earth. So, when you ask Allah (for something), ask for Al-*Firdaws* which is the best and highest part of Paradise.” (i.e. the sub-narrator added, I think the Prophet also said, ‘Above it (i.e. *Al-Firdaws*) is the Throne of the Beneficent (i.e. Allah), and from it originate the rivers of Paradise.’”

At-Tirmidhi also recorded on the authority of Mu‘adh ibn Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةَ دَرَجَةٍ مَا بَيْنَ الدَّرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْفِرْدَوْسُ أَعْلَى الْـجَنَّةِ وَ أَوْسَطُهُ وَفَوْقَ ذَلِكَ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمَنِ ، وَمِنْهَا تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْـجَنَّةِ“

“There is in Paradise one hundred grades, the distance between every two grades is as wide as the distance between

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(1) See: *Majmu' Fataawa* 16/529-531

the heaven and the earth. *Firdaws* is the highest and the best part of Paradise. The Throne of the Merciful is over it; and it is from it that the springs of Paradise originate.”

At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority ‘Ubadah ibn Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِائَةُ دَرَجَةٍ مَا بَيْنَ كُلِّ دَرَجَتَيْنِ كَمَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ، وَالْفِرْدَوْسُ أَعْلَاهَا دَرَجَةً، وَمِنْهَا تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْأَرْبَعَةُ وَمِنْ فَوْقِهَا يَكُونُ الْعَرْشُ ، فَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ فَسَلُوهُ الْفِرْدَوْسَ“

“There are in Paradise a hundred grades; between every two grades is as wide as the distance between the heaven and the earth. The highest of these grades is *Firdaws*; it is from it that the four rivers of Paradise will flow. The Divine Throne shall be on top of it. Therefore, when you ask Allah for Paradise, ask him the *Firdaws*.”

In the light of what is directly understood from the wordings of the above three *Hadith*, rivers of Paradise originate from *Firdaws*, which the highest grade in Paradise.

Springs of Paradise

The word *'Ain'*, which means spring and indicates the sources of drinks for the dwellers of Paradise, is mentioned in the noble Qur'an in singular, dual and plural forms.

One: Allah says in *Surah Al-Insaan*:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِن كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ۝٥ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ ٱللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ۝٦﴾

"Verily, the Abraar (the pious and righteous), shall drink a cup (of wine) mixed with (water from a spring in Paradise called) Kaafoor. A spring wherefrom the slaves of Allah will drink, causing it to gush forth abundantly." (Al-Insaan 76:5,6)

Meaning of the verses: Those who lived righteous life by obeying their Lord, doing righteous deeds, carrying out obligations and refraining from forbidden things will drink from a tumbler of water mixed with *Kaafoor*. They shall use the spring as they like in their palaces and dwellers in Paradise. Wherever place they want the water to gush out, it will gush out from there.(1)

In his commentary on this verse, Sayyid Qutb wrote: "This expression indicates that the drink of the righteous ones in Paradise will be mixed with *Kaafoor*. They will drink from a tumbler dipped in a spring that will gush out for them copiously. The Arabs sometimes, used to mix their wines with *Kaafoor* and, sometimes, with ginger in order to enjoy it more. Here, they are being made to understand that there is a pure and clean drink in Paradise that is presented in abundance. As for the quality of

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(1) See: *Ma'ani Al-Qur'an* 3/215; *Jami' Al-Bayan* 14/29/206; *Ma'alim At-Tazeel* 5/29/497; *Zad Al-Maseer* 8:430; *Al- Jami' li Ahkaam al-Qur'an* 10/19/125; and *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 8/312

this drink, it is understood that it is sweeter than the drinks of this world, and that the more it is drunk the more it is enjoyed. While we are in this world, we cannot determine the level, the extent or the type of the enjoyment of Paradise. We can only make approximate descriptions. Allah knows that humans possess no more than imagination of the Unseen."(1)

Two: Allah says in the same *Surah*:

﴿وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنجَبِيلًا ۝١٧ عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّىٰ سَلْسَبِيلًا ۝١٨﴾

"And they will be given to drink there a cup (of wine) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger), a spring there, called Salsabeel."

(Al-Insaan 76:17,18)

Ginger is among the substances that the Arabs love. Therefore, they are informed that in Paradise, they would be given a drink mixed with ginger that does not resemble that of this world. Rather all that is mentioned in the Book of Allah, concerning what is in Paradise does not have any equivalent in this world. The similarity between them is only in names.

Muslim recorded on the authority of Thawban, may Allah be pleased with him, who said:

“كُنْتُ قَائِمًا عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللهِ –صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ– فَجَاءَ حَبْرٌ مِنْ أَحْبَارِ الْيَهُودِ فَقَالَ: السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ، فَدَفَعْتُهُ دَفْعَةً كَادَ يُصْرَعُ مِنْهَا، فَقَالَ: لِمَ تَدْفَعُنِي؟ فَقُلْتُ: أَلَا تَقُولُ : يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ. فَقَالَ الْيَهُودِيُّ: إِنَّمَا نَدْعُوهُ بِاسْمِهِ الَّذِى سَمَّاهُ بِهِ أَهْلُهُ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ –صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ–: ” إِنَّ اسْمِي مُحَمَّدٌ الَّذِي سَمَّانِي بِهِ أَهْلِي ” . فَقَالَ الْيَهُودِيُّ: جِئْتُ أَسْأَلُكَ. فَقَالَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللهِ –صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ–: ” أَيَنْفَعُكَ شَيْءٌ إِنْ حَدَّثْتُكَ؟ “. قَالَ: أَسْمَعُ بِأُذُنَيَّ فَنَكَتَ رَسُولُ اللهِ

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(1) See: *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* 6/29/3781

–صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ– بِعُودٍ مَعَهُ. فَقَالَ: "سَلْ". فَقَالَ الْيَهُودِيُّ: أَيْنَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ –صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:– "هُمْ فِي الظُّلْمَةِ دُونَ الْجِسْرِ". قَالَ: فَمَنْ أَوَّلُ النَّاسِ إِجَازَةً؟ قَالَ: "فُقَرَاءُ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ". قَالَ الْيَهُودِيُّ: فَمَا تُحْفَتُهُمْ حِينَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ: " قَالَ: زِيَادَةُ كَبِدِ النُّونِ ". قَالَ: فَمَا غِذَاؤُهُمْ عَلَى إِثْرِهَا قَالَ: "يُنْحَرُ لَهُمْ ثَوْرُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّذِي كَانَ يَأْكُلُ مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا". قَالَ: فَمَا شَرَابُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ قَالَ: "مِنْ عَيْنٍ فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا". قَالَ: صَدَقْتَ. قَالَ: وَجِئْتُ أَسْأَلُكَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ لَا يَعْلَمُهُ أَحَدٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ أَوْ رَجُلٌ أَوْ رَجُلَانِ. قَالَ: "يَنْفَعُكَ إِنْ حَدَّثْتُكَ " قَالَ: أَسْمَعُ بِأُذُنَيَّ. قَالَ: جِئْتُ أَسْأَلُكَ عَنِ الْوَلَدِ قَالَ: "مَاءُ الرَّجُلِ أَبْيَضُ، وَمَاءُ الْمَرْأَةِ أَصْفَرُ فَإِذَا اجْتَمَعَا فَعَلَا مَنِيُّ الرَّجُلِ مَنِيَّ الْمَرْأَةِ أَذْكَرَا بِإِذْنِ اللهِ، وَإِذَا عَلَا مَنِيُّ الْمَرْأَةِ مَنِيَّ الرَّجُلِ آنَثَا بِإِذْنِ اللهِ". قَالَ الْيَهُودِيُّ: لَقَدْ صَدَقْتَ وَإِنَّكَ لَنَبِيٌّ ثُمَّ انْصَرَفَ فَذَهَبَ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ –صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:– "لَقَدْ سَأَلَنِي هَذَا عَنِ الَّذِي سَأَلَنِي عَنْهُ وَمَا لِي عِلْمٌ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْهُ حَتَّى أَتَانِيَ اللهُ بِهِ".

While I was standing beside the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, one of the rabbis of the Jews came and said: "Peace be upon you, O Muhammad." I pushed him back with a push that he was going to fall. Upon this he said: "Why do you push me?" I said: "Why don't you say: O Messenger of Allah?" The Jew said: "We call him by the name by which he was named by his family." The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "My name is Muhammad with which I was named by my family." The Jew said: "I have come

to ask you (something)." The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "Should that thing be of any benefit to you, if I tell you that?" He (the Jew) said: "I will lend my ears to it." The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, drew a line with the help of the stick that he had with him and then said: "Ask (whatever you like)." Thereupon the Jew said: "Where would the human beings be on the Day when the earth would change into another earth and the heavens too (would change into other heavens)?" The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "They would be in darkness beside the Bridge." He (the Jew) again said: "Who amongst people would be the first to cross (this bridge)?" He said: "They would be the poor amongst the emigrants." The Jew said: "What would constitute their breakfast when they would enter Paradise?" He (the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) replied: "A fish-liver." He (the Jew) said. "What would be their food after this?" He (the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) said: "A bullock which was fed in the different quarters of Paradise would be slaughtered for them." He (the Jew) said: "What would be their drink?" He (the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) said: "They would be given drink from the fountain which is named '*Salsabeel*'. He (the Jew) said: "I have come to ask you about a thing which no one amongst the people on the earth knows except a Prophet or one or two men besides him." He (the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) said: "Would it benefit you if I tell you that?" He (the Jew) said: "I would lend ears to that." He then said: "I have come to ask you about the child." He (the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) said: "The reproductive substance of man is white and that of woman (i.e. ovum central portion) yellow, and when they have sexual intercourse and the male's substance (chromosomes and genes) prevails upon the female's substance (chromosomes and genes), it is the male child that is created by Allah's Decree, and when the substance of the female prevails upon the substance contributed by the male, a female child is formed by the Decree of Allah." The Jew said: "What you have said is true; verily you are a Prophet." He then departed and went away. The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, then said: "He asked me about such and such things of which I have had no knowledge till Allah gave me that."

In this *Hadith*, the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, mentioned a spring with his saying:

" مِن عَيْنٍ فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلا ".

"...from the fountain which is named *'Salsabeel'*.

This is in confirmation of what is mentioned in the Qur'an.

Three: Allah says in *Surah Al-Mutaffifin:*

﴿ وَمِزَاجُهُۥ مِن تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا ٱلْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴾

"It (that wine) will be mixed with Tasneem: A spring whereof drink those nearest to Allah." (Al-Mutaffifin 83:27,28)

Four: Allah says in *Surah* Al-Ghashiyah, while describing Paradise:

﴿ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

"Therein will be a running spring." (Al-Ghashiyah 88:12)

The word 'spring' in this verse is a generic noun. Therefore, what is meant is springs and not one spring, as mentioned in

other verses. These verses will be mentioned and discussed – *insha Allah.*

The word 'spring' is mentioned in the Qur'an in dual form in two places in the glorious Qur'an in *Surah Ar-Rahmaan.*

Allah says:

﴿ فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾

"In them (both) will be two springs flowing (free)." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:50)

The meaning: There are two springs, in the first two gardens, flowing with *honor* and abundance. Some scholars are of the view that one of the two springs is *Tasnim* and the other is *Salsabeel.*[1]

Allah also says:

﴿ فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ ﴿٦٦﴾ ﴾

"In them (both) will be two springs gushing forth." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:66)

The verse means: There are two springs that gush forth copiously and unceasingly.

There are also other verses in which the word 'spring' is mentioned in plural form. Some of these verses are:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

"Verily, the pious ones will be in the midst of Gardens and Springs (in the Paradise)." (Adh-Dhariyaat 51:15)

In *Surah Al-Mursalaat*, He says:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلَٰلٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾

"Verily, the pious ones shall be amidst shades and springs." (Al-Mursalaat 77:41)

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[1] See: *Jami' Al-Bayaan* 13/27/148; *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/478; and *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 9/27/117

What is probably meant by springs in the above verses could be what Allah describes in the following verse from *Surah Muhammad:*

﴿ مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَآ أَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن مَّآءٍ غَيْرِ ءَاسِنٍ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُۥ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ وَأَنْهَٰرٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ﴾

"The description of Paradise which the pious ones have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure)." (Muhammad 47:15)

The springs could be the mentioned rivers of water, milk, wine and honey. It is also possible that they are else of the drinks that the dwellers of Paradise would like. And Allah knows best.[1]

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[1] See: *Jami' al-Bayaan 14/29/244; Zad Al-Maseer 4/403; Al-Jami li Ahkaam al-Qur'an 5/19/32;* and *Ruh Al-Ma'ani 5/14/57*

Gardens of Paradise

Allah mentioned the word *Rawdah,* which means 'garden' in a number of places in the glorious Qur'an.

It is mentioned in singular form once. That is in *Surah Ar-Room* where Allah says:

﴿ فَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَهُمْ فِى رَوْضَةٍ يُحْبَرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

"Then as for those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and did righteous good deeds, such shall be honored and made to enjoy luxurious life (forever) in a Garden of delight (Paradise)." (Ar-Room 30:15)

What is meant by Garden in the above verse is the Garden o Paradise. 'Rawdah' in Arabic language is a greenery area. It is particularly mentioned in the verse because it was the most admirable sight to the Arabs. There was no scene more delightful to their sight than greenery.[1]

Ibn 'Abbaas,may Allah be pleased with him and his father, said: "There is tree in Paradise under which shade a fast-moving rider will travel for a hundred years without being able to cross it. The people of Paradise will come out and they will invite out also the dwellers of the chambers of Paradise. They will chat among themselves. When one of them would like to reminisce about the life of this world, Allah will send a wind that will shake the tree and make it emit all the fun the people used to have in the world."[2]

Meaning of the above verse: Those who believed in Allah and His Messenger and acted according to Allah's injunctions shall be in gardens, full of different plants and flowers. They will stay happily in these beautiful gardens, enjoying pleasant life. They will abide therein in *honor* and bliss.(1)

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[1] See: *Zad Al-Maseer* 6:29

[2] See: *Ad-Durr Al-Manzoor* 5/153

The word 'Rawdah' is mentioned in the Qur'an once in plural form once in *Surah Ash-Shoorah*. That is Allah's statement:

﴿ تَرَى ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ مُشۡفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُواْ وَهُوَ وَاقِعُۢ بِهِمۡۗ وَٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فِي رَوۡضَاتِ ٱلۡجَنَّاتِۖ لَهُم مَّا يَشَآءُونَ عِندَ
رَبِّهِمۡۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَضۡلُ ٱلۡكَبِيرُ ٢٢ ﴾

"You will see (on the Day of Resurrection), the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers) fearful of that which they have earned, and it (Allah's Torment) will surely befall them. But those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds (will be) in the flowering meadows of the Gardens (Paradise). They shall have whatsoever they desire with their Lord. That is the supreme Grace, (Paradise)." (Ash-Shura 42:22)

The message in this noble verse is directed to the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,.(2) Some scholars are of the view that this message is directed generally to all those who have understanding. However, there is no contradiction in this. The purpose is to bring to attention of the listener, the awful situation of the wrong-doers; and the wrong-doers in the verse are the disbelievers.(3)

Meaning of the noble verse: Allah, High and Exalted, addresses in general, all those who understand to remember the terrible situation the disbelievers will be in on the Day of Resurrection, and the horror of the punishment they will suffer on that Day

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 25/103; *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 7/165; And *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 7/21/26

(2) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/25/22

(3) See: *Ruh al-Ma 'ani* 9/25/29; and *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 25/78

as a result of their disbelief in Allah and their disobedience to Him while they were in this world. Allah wants His servants to understand that this punishment will inevitably take place. On the other hand, the believers, who obeyed their Lord and acted according to His injunctions while they were in this world, will settle down in the most pleasant, the highest and the purest locations in Paradise. They will enjoy bliss that no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard and no heart has ever imagined in the audience of their Noble Lord. One could then imagine the difference between the one who is fearful of Allah's inevitable punishment that he will suffer in ignominy and the one who will be in the flowering meadows of the Gardens of Paradise, happy, contented and honored.

Allah's favor that He will endow on His believing servants on that Day will far outweigh whatever enjoyments of this world. It is only Allah, the Generous and Merciful Lord, Who knows the extent of that favor.(1)

There are authentic *Hadiths* that mentioned that between the Prophet's apartment and his pulpit is a garden of Paradise. Imaam Malik recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah or Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with both of them, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“مَا بَيْنَ بَيْتِي وَمِنْبَرِي رَوْضَةٌ مِنْ رِيَاضِ الْجَنَّةِ ، وَمِنْبَرِي عَلَى حَوْضِي”

"Between my house and my pulpit is a garden among the gardens of Paradise; and my pulpit is upon my cistern."

What this *Hadith* means is that the space between the Prophet's apartment and his pulpit will become a garden from among the gardens of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection.

However, some scholars say: This is figurative. Since sitting down in this place is for learning the Qur'an and Islamic injunctions, the place is likened to one of the gardens of Paradise due to what is done there and as a result of mercy that descend there and happiness attained through remembrance of Allah, recitation of the Qur'an and keeping circles of knowledge. Therefore, it is in the view that all these actions lead to Paradise that the very location where they take place is likened to Paradise.(1)

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(1) See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 13/25/22; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/187

However, what could be directly understood from the wordings of the *Hadith* indicates that the space mentioned by the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, will exactly be a garden among the gardens of Paradise. And Allah knows best.

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(1) See: *At-Tamheed* by Ibn Abdul-Barr 2/278; these two views are mentioned by An-Nawawi in his commentary on Sahih Muslim 5/9/161, and by Ibn Hajar in Fath Al-Bari 4/100

Gates of Paradise

Allah mentioned the gates (or doors) of Paradise in three verses.

One: He says in *Surah* Ar-Ra'd:

﴿جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ يَدۡخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنۡ ءَابَآئِهِمۡ وَأَزۡوَٰجِهِمۡ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمۡۖ وَٱلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَدۡخُلُونَ
عَلَيۡهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٖ﴾

"'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), which they shall enter and (also) those who acted righteously from among their fathers, and their wives, and their offspring. And angels shall enter unto them from every gate." (Ar-Ra'd 13:23)

The above verse is closely related to the preceding verses in the same *Surah*. It is an explanation for the words, 'good end' mentioned in Allah's statement:

﴿أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عُقۡبَى ٱلدَّارِ﴾

"For such there is a good end." (Ar-Ra'd 13:22)

Acting righteously means believing in Allah and His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, and acting according to the injunctions of Islam. This is a blow to those who hold unto their lineage for safety from Allah's punishment. For, there is no recognition for family lineage. Allah's *honor* is only attained through piety.(1)

Meaning of the verse: In Paradise, Allah, High and Exalted, will bring together these righteous people and their fathers, mothers, spouses and children who also deserve to enter Paradise, even though they have not attained their positions. Their relatives who are below them in degree will be made to join them; and if these relatives are above them in degree, they will be made to join those relatives. All this is a manifestation of favor and blessing from Allah on His righteous servants.(1)

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 16/424; *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 4/373; and *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 5/13/143

This is confirmed by Allah's statement:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُم بِإِيمَٰنٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ﴾

"And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in Faith: to them shall We join their offspring." (At-Toor 52:21)

Imaam Ahmad recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَرْفَعُ الدَّرَجَةَ لِلْعَبْدِ الصَّالِحِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ ، فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ ، أَنَّى لِي هَذِهِ؟ فَيَقُولُ: بِاسْتِغْفَارِ وَلَدِكَ لَكَ"

"Allah will raise the degree of a righteous servant in Paradise. The servant will say, 'My Lord, from where did I get this?' Allah will say, 'From your son's seeking forgiveness for you."

He also recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمَيْنِ يَمُوتُ لَهُمَا ثَلَاثَةُ أَوْلَادٍ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحِنْثَ إِلَّا أَدْخَلَهُمَا اللهُ وَإِيَّاهُمْ بِفَضْلِ رَحْمَتِهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَقَالَ: يُقَالُ لَهُمْ: ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ ، قَالَ: فَيَقُولُونَ: حَتَّى يَجِيءَ أَبَوَانَا، قَالَ: ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ فَيَقُولُونَ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ ، فَيُقَالُ لَهُمْ: ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَوَاكُمْ"

"There are no two Muslims (male and female) who lost three

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(1) Ibid.

children that have reached the age of maturity to death except that Allah make the parents and these children enter Paradise out of His Mercy." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, added: "The children will be told, 'Enter Paradise.' But they will respond, 'No, until our parents come with us!' They will be told this three times and they will give the same answer each time. They will then be told, 'Then enter Paradise, you and your parents.'"

This noble verse is a great glad tiding for whoever has a righteous parent, child or wife (who is also righteous). For, when he enters Paradise, he will be made to join the righteous relatives who will also enter Paradise.(1)

The verse also indicates that the Angels will enter upon the dwellers of Paradise from every gate to congratulate them for their being blessed with admittance to Paradise, for the *honor* and favor that Allah bestowed on them and for their being neighbours to the noble Prophets and the Messengers, peace be upon them.

Two: Allah says in *Surah* Sad:

﴿جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ مُّفَتَّحَةً لَّهُمُ ٱلْأَبْوَٰبُ ٥٠﴾

"'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), whose doors will be open for them." (Sad 38:50)

This noble verse is an explanation of the preceding verse in the same *Surah*. For, when Allah says,

﴿وَإِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسْنَ مَـَٔابٍ ٤٩﴾

"And verily, for the pious and righteous persons is a good final return", (Sad 38:49);

it is perfectly in place to explain the meaning of the final return, which is Eden Paradise.(1)

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(1) See: *At-Tahreer* and *At-Tanweer* 13/131

If one takes a deep look at this noble verse, one will discover a wonderful meaning: When the dwellers of Paradise will enter it, its gates will remain opened, as opposed to the Hell-Fire whose gates are always closed on its dwellers. Allah says:

﴿إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِم مُّؤْصَدَةٌ ٨﴾

"Verily, it shall be closed upon them." (Al-Humazah 104:8)

In keeping the gates of Paradise always open is an indication that it is an abode of safety, peace and security. Its dwellers will not need to close their doors as they used to do in this world.(2)

Three: Allah says in *Surah Az-Zumar:*

﴿وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْاْ رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًاۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ أَبْوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَٱدْخُلُوهَا خَٰلِدِينَ ٧٣﴾

"And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups, till, when they reach it, and its gates will be opened (before their arrival for their reception) and its keepers will say: 'Salaamun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein.'" (Az-Zumar 39:73)

The relationship between this verse and the preceding one in the same *Surah* is that Allah has mentioned the situation of the dwellers of Hell in a previous verse by His statement:

﴿وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًاۖ﴾

"And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups till." (Az-Zumar 39:71)

It follows then that the situation of the dwellers of Paradise deserves to be mentioned.

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/23/174; *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 26/218; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/69

(2) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p84-85

Those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups according to their merits of their deeds. Each group will comprise of members of the same grade. They will be happy in the company of their brethren, as they used to do when they were in the world.(1)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"أَوَّلُ زُمْرَةٍ تَدْخُلُ الْـجَنَّةَ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ ، وَالَّذِينَ عَلَى إِثْرِهِمْ كَأَشَدِّ كَوْكَبٍ إِضَاءَةً"

"The first batch (of people) who will enter Paradise will be (glittering) like a full moon; and those who will enter next will be (glittering) like the brightest star."

Allah's statement,

﴿حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا﴾

'Till when they reach it',

is in reference to the gates of Paradise after passing the *Sirat*(2), where they will be stopped and mutual retaliation will be established among them regarding wrongs they have committed against one another in the world.[1]

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(1) See: *Ibid* p83

(2) The *Siraat* is a bridge that will be laid across Hell-fire; it is a frightening and scaring passageway. People will pass across it on their way to Paradise; some will pass across as quickly as a twinkle of an eye; some as a lightning; some as a wind; some as a bird; some as fast horses; some will pass across it walking fast and some will be dragged across it. People will pass across it according to their deeds until he will pass it, one whose light will be as little as the size of the thumb of his feet. There will also be those who will be seized and cast into Fire. Whoever passes the Sirat successfully will enter Paradise.

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“يَخْلُصُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ مِنَ النَّارِ فَيُحْبَسُونَ عَلَى قَنطَرَةٍ بَيْنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ فَيُقَصُّ
لِبَعْضِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ مَظَالِمُ كَانَتْ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَتَّى إِذَا هُذِّبُوا وَنُقُّوا أُذِنَ لَهُمْ
فِي دُخُولِ الْجَنَّةِ .فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ :لَأَحَدُهُمْ أَهْدَى بِمَنْزِلِهِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ
مِنْهُ بِمَنْزِلِهِ كَانَ فِي الدُّنْيَا ”

“The believers, after being saved from the (Hell) Fire, will be stopped at a bridge between Paradise and Hell and mutual retaliation will be established among them regarding wrongs they have committed in the world against one another. After they are cleansed and purified (through the retaliation), they will be admitted into Paradise; and by Him in Whose Hand Muhammad's soul is, everyone of them will know his dwelling in Paradise better than he knew his dwelling in this world.”

After mutual retaliation have been established among the believers regarding wrongs they have committed in the world against one another and they have been purified and cleansed, they will hold consultation among themselves concerning who will seek permission on their behalf to enter Paradise. They will go to Adam, peace be upon him, and then to Moosaa then to Isa and then to Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon them all. It will be the Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, who will eventually intercede on behalf of all the believers to be allowed to enter Paradise.[2]

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(1) See: *Tafseer* Al-Qur'an Al-*'Azeem* 7/110

(2) See: *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* by Ibn Abil-'Izz Al-Hanafi p257; and *Tasfeer Ibn Katheer* 2/276

Muslim recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“أَنَا أَوَّلُ شَفِيعٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ”

"I will be the first intercessor in the Paradise."

In another version still on the authority of Anas, the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“آتِي بَابَ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، فَأَسْتَفْتِحُ ، فَيَقُولُ الْخَازِنُ: مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ فَأَقُولُ:
مُحَمَّدٌ. فَيَقُولُ: بِكَ أُمِرْتُ ، لَا أَفْتَحُ لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلَكَ ”.

“I will come to the gate of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection and would seek its opening. The keeper would say, 'Who are you?' I would say, 'Muhammad.' He would then say, 'It is for you that I have been ordered, and not to open it for anyone before you'.” (Recorded by Muslim)

Paradise is Allah's abode of *honor*, prepared for His righteous servants. When they come to it, they will find its gates closed. They will then beseech its Owner to open it for them; and they will seek the intercession of the Resolute Messengers on that. All of them will hold back from that until the request for intercession will come to the last of them all who is their chief and the best of them – Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon and all other Prophets and Messengers. He will say, “I am the one suitable for it.” He will come underneath the Throne, go down in prostration for his Lord and beseech Allah as He will permit him to do. He will then be allowed to raise his head. He will be commanded to make whatever request he wants to make. He will then intercede to Allah to allow the gates of Paradise to be opened. His intercession will be accepted and the gates will be opened as *honor* for him and to confirm his position in the estimation of his Lord.

This kind of dwelling whose Owner is the King of the kings and the Lord of all the worlds can only be entered after those great trials that started since a servant reached the age of discretion in this world until he eventually enters Paradise, and layers of difficulties he will face on the Day of Resurrection until Allah will allow the Seal of His Prophets and Messengers and His most beloved servant to intercede with him on behalf of the rest of mankind.

It is by this that Allah's favor can be maximally appreciated, and the joy and delight that result from the favor be fully savoured so that no ignorant person will think that Paradise is a mere pub that can be entered by whoever wants to. Allah's Paradise is precious; for people to enter it, they need to cross a number of obstacles and surmount dangers and difficulties.(1)

As earlier mentioned, the mention of the gates of Paradise is made in the noble Qur'an in plural form in three verses. As for the exact number of the gates, it is only mentioned in the *Sunnah*. It is discovered in the light of a keen study of the authentic *Hadiths* that the number of the gates is eight.

Muslim recorded on the authority of 'Umar bin Al-Khattaab, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَتَوَضَّأُ فَيَبْلُغُ – أَوْ فَيُسْبِغُ – الْوُضُوءَ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ
إِلَّا اللهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُ اللهِ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا فُتِحَتْ لَهُ أَبْوَابُ الْـجَنَّةِ الثَّمَانِيَةُ يَدْخُلُ مِنْ
أَيِّهَا شَاءَ“.

"If anyone amongst you performs the ablution, and then completes the ablution well and then says: I testify that there is

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p83

no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger, the eight gates of Paradise would be opened for him and he may enter by whichever of them he wishes."

Muslim also recorded on the authority of 'Ubadah ibn Samit, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”مَنْ قَالَ: أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَأَنَّ
عِيسَى عَبْدُ اللهِ وَابْنُ أَمَتِهِ، وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ، وَأَنَّ الْـجَنَّةَ حَقٌّ
وَأَنَّ النَّارَ حَقٌّ، أَدْخَلَهُ اللهُ مِنْ أَيِّ أَبْوَابِ الْـجَنَّةِ الثَّمَانِيَةِ شَاءَ“.

"He who said, 'There is no god but Allah, He is One and there is no associate with Him, that Muhammad is his servant and His messenger, that Christ is His servant and the son of His female-servant and His word which He communicated to Mary and that he is a Spirit from Him, that Paradise is a fact and Hell is a fact,' Allah would make him (he who affirms these truths) enter Paradise through any one of its eight doors which he would like."

Ibn Majah recorded on the authority of 'Uqbah bin 'Abd As-Sulami, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say:

”مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَمُوتُ، لَهُ ثَلَاثَةٌ مِنَ الْوَلَدِ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحِنْثَ، إِلَّا تَلَقَّوْهُ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ
الْـجَنَّةِ الثَّمَانِيَةِ، مِنْ أَيِّهَا شَاءَ دَخَلَ“

"Any Muslim who loses three children who have not yet reached the age of puberty will be received by these children at the eight gates of Paradise (telling him) to enter from whichever gate he likes."

An-Nasai recorded on the authority of Qurrah Al-Muzani, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated: Whenever Allah's

Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, held a sitting; a group of his Companions would sit around him and among them was a man who had a small boy that used to follow him. The man would sit the boy in front of himself whenever he attended the Prophet's sitting. All of a sudden, the boy then died and the man stopped coming to the Prophet's sitting due to his grief over the death of his son. When the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, did not see the man for some time, he inquired about him and he was told, 'O Messenger of Allah, his son that you used to see with him had died.' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, went to meet the man and asked him about his son. The man told him that he had died. Upon this, the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

"يَا فُلَانُ ، أَيُّمَا كَانَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكَ: أَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِهِ عُمْرَكَ ، أَوْ لَا تَأْتِي غَدًا إِلَى بَابٍ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْـجَنَّةِ إِلَّا وَجَدْتَهُ قَدْ سَبَقَكَ إِلَيْهِ يَفْتَحُهُ لَكَ"

'O so and so, which of the two is dearer to you: To continue to derive joy from seeing your son or to come tomorrow (on the Day of Resurrection) to one of the gates of Paradise and find out that your son has arrived there before you to open it for you?'

The man said, 'Messenger of Allah ﷺ having him arriving at the gate of Paradise before me and opening it for me is dearer to me.' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

"فَذَاكَ لَكَ"

'Then you will have that.'"

Names of some of the gates of Paradise have been mentioned in some *Hadiths*. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَنْ أَنْفَقَ زَوْجَيْنِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ نُودِيَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْـجَنَّةِ: يَا عَبْدَ اللهِ، هَذَا خَيْرٌ، فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّلَاةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجِهَادِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الْجِهَادِ وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّيَامِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الرَّيَانِ وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّدَقَةِ دُعِيَ مِنْ بَابِ الصَّدَقَةِ" فَقَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ بِأَبِي وَأُمِّي يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ ، مَا عَلَى مَنْ دُعِيَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ مِنْ ضَرُورَةٍ ، فَهَلْ يُدْعَى أَحَدٌ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْأَبْوَابِ كُلِّهَا . قَالَ ("نَعَمْ ، وَأَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ"

"Whoever gives two kinds (of things or property) in charity for Allah's Cause, will be called from the gates of Paradise and will be addressed, 'O slaves of Allah! Here is prosperity.' So, whoever was amongst the people who used to offer their prayers, will be called from the gate of the prayer; and whoever was amongst the people who used to participate in *Jihad*, will be called from the gate of *Jihad*; and whoever was amongst those who used to observe fasts, will be called from the gate of *Ar-Rayyan*; whoever was amongst those who used to give in charity, will be called from the gate of charity." Abu Bakr said, "Let my parents be sacrificed for you, O Allah's Messenger! No distress or need will befall him who will be called from those gates. Will there be any one who will be called from all these gates?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, and I hope you will be one of them." (This is Al-Bukhari's version)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim also recorded on the authority of Sahl ibn Sa'd As-*Sa'eed*i, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ بَابًا يُقَالُ لَهُ الرَّيَّانُ يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ الصَّائِمُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، لَا يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ أَحَدٌ غَيْرُهُمْ يُقَالُ: أَيْنَ الصَّائِمُونَ ، فَيَقُومُونَ ، لَا يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ أَحَدٌ غَيْرُهُمْ، فَإِذَا دَخَلُوا أُغْلِقَ فَلَمْ يَدْخُلْ مِنْهُ أَحَدٌ"

"There is a gate in Paradise called *Ar-Rayyan*, and those who observe fasts will enter through it on the Day of Resurrection and none except them will enter through it. It will be said, 'Where are those who used to observe fasts?' They will get up, and none except them will enter through it. After their entry the gate will be closed and nobody will enter through it."

In the long *Hadith* on intercession that Ahmad, Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah – may Allah be pleased with him, it is mentioned that Allah, High and Exalted will tell His Messenger Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, after he will go down in prostration for Him under the Throne:

”يَا مُحَمَّدُ ارْفَعْ رَأْسَكَ ، سَلْ تُعْطَهْ وَاشفَعْ تُشَفَّعْ ، فَأَرْفَعُ رَأْسِي فَأَقُولُ: أُمَّتِي يَا رَبِّ فَيُقَالُ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ أَدْخِلْ مِنْ أُمَّتِكَ مَنْ لَا حِسَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ الْبَابِ الْأَيْمَنِ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْـجَنَّةِ ، وَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ النَّاسِ فِيمَا سِوَى ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْأَبْوَابِ ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ : إِنَّ مَا بَيْنَ الْمِصرَاعَيْنِ مِنْ مَصَارِيعِ الْـجَنَّةِ كَمَا بَيْنَ مَكَّةَ وَحِمْيَرَ، أَوْ كَمَا بَيْنَ مَكَّةَ وَبُصْرَى“

"O Muhammad! Raise your head. Ask, and it will be granted. Intercede It (your intercession) will be accepted.' So I will raise my head and Say, 'My followers, O my Lord! My followers, O my Lord'. It will be said, 'O Muhammad! Let those of your followers who have no accounts, enter through such a gate of the gates of Paradise as lies on the right; and they will share the other gates with the people.' The Prophet further said, "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, the distance between every two gate-posts of Paradise is like the distance between Makkah and Busra (in Sham)." (This is Al-Bukhari's version)

In this *Hadith*, one of the gates of Paradise is called 'the gate on the right'. The *Hadith* also indicates the wideness of each of its gates. Another *Hadith* that indicates the wideness of the gates of Paradise is the *Hadith* recorded by Muslim on the authority of 'Utbah ibn Ghazwan, may Allah be pleased with him, who said:

”وَلَقَدْ ذُكِرَ لَنَا أَنَّ مَا بَيْنَ مِصْرَاعَيْنِ مِنْ مَصَارِيعِ الْـجَنَّةِ مَسِيرَةُ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً وَلَيَأْتِيَنَّ عَلَيْهَا يَوْمٌ ، وَهُوَ كَظِيظٌ مِنَ الزِّحَامِ“

"We have been told that between every two door leaves of Paradise is a distance which one would be able to cover in forty years from one end to another, and a day would come when it would be fully packed."

There is no contradiction between the *Hadiths* concerning the wideness of the gates of Paradise. The purpose is to bring it closer to the understanding of humans. Allah knows best.

It is also mentioned in the *Sunnah* that Paradise has a physical ring that moves and rattles. Muslim recorded on the authority of *Anas bin* Malik – may Allah be pleased with him that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

” أَنَا أَكْثَرُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ تَبَعًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ يَقْرَعُ بَابَ الْـجَنَّةِ“

"Amongst the Prophets, I would have the largest following on the Day of Resurrection, and I would be the first to knock at the door of Paradise."

There are other authentic *Hadiths* in this regard.

Keepers of Paradise

A mention is made of the keepers of Paradise once in the Qur'an in *Surah Az-Zumar.* That is in Allah's statement:

﴿وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَٱدْخُلُوهَا خَٰلِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾﴾

"And its keepers will say: 'Salaamun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein.'" (Az-Zumar 39:73)

As for the *Sunnah*, there is a number of *Hadith* in which it is mentioned. Among them are:

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, that the messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"آتِي بَابَ الْـجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَأَسْتَفْتِحُ فَيَقُولُ الْـخَازِنُ: مَنْ أَنْتَ ؟فَأَقُولُ : مُحَمَّدٌ. فَيَقُولُ: بِكَ أُمِرْتُ، لَا أَفْتَحُ لأَحَدٍ قَبْلَكَ"

"I will come to the gate of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection and would seek its opening. The keeper would say, 'Who are you?' I would say, 'Muhammad.' He would then say, 'It is for you that I have been ordered, and not to open it for anyone before you'."

The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, also said:

"مَنْ أَنْفَقَ زَوْجَيْنِ فِي سَبِيلِ الله دَعَاهُ خَزَنَةُ الْـجَنَّةِ كُلُّ خَزَنَةِ بَابٍ أَيْ فُلَ هَلُمَّ"

"Whoever spends two things in Allah's Cause, will be called by all the gate-keepers of Paradise who will be saying, 'O so-and-so! Come here.'

Abu Bakr said, "O Allah's Messenger! Such persons will never be destroyed." The Prophet said,

"إِنِّي لَأَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ"

"I hope you will be one of them." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

What the above *Hadiths* indicate is that the keepers of Paradise will address the dwellers of Paradise, as confirmed by the noble verse. Their greeting of peace indicates that the inhabitants of Paradise will be free and safe from all undesirable things. After their entrance into Paradise, no harm or objectionable thing will happen to them.(1)

According to the verse, the keepers will firstly give the dwellers of Paradise glad tiding of peace and secondly of their good deeds, admittance to Paradise and abiding therein forever.(2)

We beseech Allah, in His infinite mercy, to include us among the dwellers of Paradise.

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/34-37; and *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* 27/22

(2) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p84

Allah says:

﴿ ٱلْأَخِلَّآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ (٦٧) يَٰعِبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْيَوْمَ وَلَآ أَنتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ (٦٨) ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا۟ مُسْلِمِينَ
(٦٩) ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْجَنَّةَ أَنتُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ (٧٠) يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ
مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ ۖ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ ٱلْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ ٱلْأَعْيُنُ ۖ وَأَنتُمْ فِيهَا
خَٰلِدُونَ (٧١) وَتِلْكَ ٱلْجَنَّةُ ٱلَّتِىٓ أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٧٢)
لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٌ كَثِيرَةٌ مِّنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ (٧٣) ﴾

"Friends on that Day will be foes one to another except Al-Muttaqoon (pious - see V.2:2). (It will be said to the true believers of Islamic Monotheism): My worshippers! No fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve, (You) who believed in Our Ayaat (proofs, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and were Muslims (i.e. who submit totally to Allah's Will, and believe in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism).Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness.Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them; (there will be) therein all that inner-selves could desire, all that eyes could delight in and you will abide therein forever.This is the Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of your deeds which you used to do (in the life of the world). Therein for you will be fruits in plenty, of which you will eat (as you desire)." (Az-Zukhruf 43:67-73)

The dwellers of Paradise will enjoy numerous delights that will be discussed in detail in the following pages:

Chapter Three

Delights of Paradise

Seeing Allah in Paradise

Seeing Allah is the greatest delight of Paradise. It is the utmost goal and the most precious gift that Allah can give to any of His servants. It is also the greatest happiness. It the highest degree of delight for Allah's righteous servants. For, when the dwellers of Paradise see Allah, High and Exalted, with their eyes, they will forget whatever they are in of delight. This is because nothing is like Allah; He can never be imagined nor encompassed by human intelligence. Minds are too bewildered to accurately understand His essence and tongues are too weak to find suitable description for Him.

Allah is Unique in His Essence and does not resemble any other being. He is too Exalted in His Majesty to be compared to any of His creatures. Glory be to Him and nothing can be compared to Him and He has no partner. All tyrants surrender to His Greatness and the earlier and latter generations of the creation are humbled by His decree. His is the favor that overwhelms all things. Therefore, being blessed enough to see Him is the great source of satisfaction and the highest degree a servant can attain.(1)

It is in the light of this that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, would beseech his Lord to grant him the favor of seeing His noble Countenance. His *honorable* Companions – may Allah be pleased with them – also make the same supplication. It is authentically reported that ‘Ammar ibn Yasir, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the mosque one day and performed a short prayer. Thereafter, he passed by a group of people who said to him, “Abu Yaqazan, your prayer is so short!” He said, “Did you regard it as short?” They answered in the affirmative. He said, “As for me, I have made, in that prayer, a supplication I heard from Allah’s Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,.” He then went away. A man from among the audience followed him and asked him about the supplication. ‘Ammar then came back and informed them about the supplication.(1) It is as follows:

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(1) See: *Al-Yawm Al-Akhir fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* by Ahmad Faiz p345-353

”اللَّهُمَّ بِعِلْمِكَ الْغَيْبِ وَقُدْرَتِكَ عَلَى الْـخَلْقِ، أَحْيِنِي مَا عَلِمْتَ الْـحَيَاةَ خَيْرًا لِي
وَتَوَفَّنِي إِذَا كَانَتِ الْوَفَاةُ خَيْرًا لِي اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ خَشْيَتَكَ فِي الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ
وَكَلِمَةَ الْعَدْلِ وَالْـحَقِّ فِي الْغَضَبِ وَالرِّضَا وَأَسْأَلُكَ الْقَصْدَ فِي الْفَقْرِ وَالْغِنَا،
وَأَسْأَلُكَ نَعِيمًا لَا يَبِيدُ وَقُرَّةَ عَيْنٍ لَا تَنْقَطِعُ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ الرِّضَا بَعْدَ الْقَضَاءِ وَأَسْأَلُكَ
بَرْدَ الْعَيْشِ بَعْدَ الْـمَوْتِ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ لَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى وَجْهِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ الشَّوْقَ إِلَى
لِقَائِكَ فِي غَيْرِ ضَرَّاءَ مُضِرَّةٍ وَلَا فِتْنَةٍ مُضِلَّةٍ: اللَّهُمَّ زَيِّنَّا بِزِينَةِ الْإِيمَانِ وَاجْعَلْنَا هُدَاةً
مُهْتَدِينَ“

“Allahumma bi ‘ilmikal-ghayb, waqudratika alal-khalq, ahyini ma ‘alimtal-hayata khayran li watawaffani idha ‘alimtal-wafata khayran li, allahumma inni as-aluka khashyataka fil-ghaybi washshahadah, wa-as-aluka kalimatal-haqqi fir-rida walghadab, wa-as-alukal-qasda fil-ghina walfaqr, wa-as-aluka na‘iman la yanfad, wa-as-aluka qurrata ‘aynin la tanqati‘, wa-as-alukar-rida ba‘dal-qada, wa-as-aluka bardal-‘ayshi ba‘dal-mawt, wa-as-aluka

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(1) He wanted as many people as possible to benefit from the supplication.

ladh-dhatan-nazari ila wajhik, wash-shawqa ila liqa-ik fi ghayri darraa mudirrah, wala fitnatin mudillah, allahumma zayyinna bizinatil-iman waj‘alna hudatan muhtadin.

'O Allah, by Your knowledge of the unseen and Your power over creation, keep me alive so long as You know such life to be good for me and take me if You know death to be better for me. O Allah, make me fearful of You whether in secret or in public and I ask You to make me true in speech, in times of pleasure and anger. I ask you to make me moderate in times of wealth and poverty and I ask You for everlasting bliss and joy which will never cease. I ask You to make me pleased with what You have decreed and for an easy life after death. I ask You for the sweetness of looking upon Your Face and a longing to encounter You in a manner which does not entail a calamity which will bring about harm nor a trial which will cause deviation. O Allah, beautify us with the adornment of faith and make us of those who guide and are rightly guided.’”(1)

Since seeing Allah is neither a food nor a drink or a dress or shelter or any enjoyment that is physically related to the righteous slaves of Allah in Paradise; since it is only a situation among the situations of the people of Paradise, and the last and the greatest delight that they dwellers of Paradise will be granted. This will be discussed in detail in chapter three.

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(1) See: *Al-Ihsan fi Tartib Sahih* Ibn Hibban by Amir ‘Alaad-din Al-Farisi 3/212-213

Eternity and Infinite Nature of Paradise

It is a manifestation of Allah's boundless favor and generosity that He makes Paradise an eternal abode. It is a dwelling that will absolutely never end. Whoever is admitted into Paradise will enjoy an everlasting delight that is unimaginable to humans however much they try. In fact, it is an enjoyment that goes beyond what a heart could ever perceive.(1)

That is a fact that must be necessarily known in the religion.(2) It is the belief held by the generality of earlier and latter scholars of Islam.(3)

Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The righteous predecessors, their eminent scholars, and the entire *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* scholars hold that there are some creations of Allah that will absolutely never be annihilated or cease to exist such as Paradise, Hell and the Throne."(4)

The dwellers of Paradise shall be made to live therein forever and ever. The life of Paradise is real and unending. Its dwellers will be in perpetual happiness, bliss and delight.(5)

Allah says:

﴿وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ سُعِدُوا فَفِي ٱلْجَنَّةِ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ وَٱلْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا
شَآءَ رَبُّكَ عَطَآءً غَيْرَ مَجْذُوذٍ ﴿١٠٨﴾﴾

"And those who are blessed, they will be in Paradise, abiding therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord wills; a gift without an end." (Hood 11:108)

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(1) See: *Rihlah al-Khulud* by Hasan Ayyub p226

(2) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p400

(3) See: *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* by Ibn Ab0l-'*Izz Al-Hanafi* p480

(4) *Majmu' Fataawa* 18/307

(5) See: Ash-*Shari'ah* by Al-Ajurri p398; *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 1/150; *Tafseer* Ibn Abi Hatim 1/92; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 1/92

In this verse, Allah, High and Exalted, informs us that the dwellers of Paradise shall live therein forever except for the period that He wills they will not be there. That is when some of them will be in Hell (to serve the punishment that is commensurate with their sins and then be removed and admitted to Paradise), or when they are in this world, or at the period between death and resurrection.(1)

The exception in the verse decisively indicates everlasting nature of Paradise and its bliss and delight. This could be deducted from Allah's statement, 'a gift without an end.' If Allah's gift is without an end, then Paradise (which is the manifestation of that gift) is everlasting and never ceases to exist. Therefore, the exception means Paradise's infinity is not, in itself, a matter that Allah must obligingly maintain. It is only a matter that is subject to His Will for whatever He wishes to let be exists and whatever He does not wish to be will never be. And it is His Will that Paradise should exist forever and that His gift should be without an end. All praise and favor are Allah's.(2)

No one claims that Paradise is finite but the *Jahmiyyah,*(3) which is a misguided and heretic group. They are supported in this false claim by the Mu'tazilah,(4) thereby contradicting the Qur'an and the *Sunnah.*(5)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p385

(2) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p384; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 4/383

(3) Jahmites are the followers of Jahm bin Safwan (d. 128-745), a radical he-etic. Among other things, they deny that Allah, the Exalted, is above His Throne, and they allege that He is everywhere. They also claim that Faith is mere knowledge and that humans have no freewill at all and that they are coerced into doing whatever they do.

(4) A rationalistic philosophical school founded in the Umayyad period by Wasil ibn 'Ataa and 'Amr ibn 'Ubayd. It gained sway over the Abbaasid state for over a hundred years and continue to influence the Islamic thought until the 12th century. (Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam p421-426) One of the major beliefs of this deviant school believes that Allah should be stripped of all His Attributes and that He is present everywhere and in everything.

(5) See: *Majmu' al-Fataawa Taymiyyah* 18/307

In this erroneous belief of theirs, none of the righteous predecessors, from among the Prophet's Companions or their successors or any of the righteous Imaams who followed them or any of the *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* agreed with the Jahmiyyah and the Mu'tazilah. Therefore, the claim of finiteness of Paradise is false and rejected. It was refuted by the leaders of the Muslims and the makers of such a claim were declared disbelievers.[1]

The belief of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* including the righteous predecessors is clear on infinite nature of Paradise and that it is everlasting. The Qur'an attests to this belief as it manifests in the following verses:

﴿وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى رُزِقْنَا مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَأُتُوا۟ بِهِۦ مُتَشَٰبِهًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَآ أَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾﴾

"And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say: "This is what we were provided with before," and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste) and they shall have therein Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives) and they will abide therein forever." (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

﴿وَأَمَّا ٱلَّذِينَ ٱبْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِى رَحْمَةِ ٱللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾﴾

"But, for those who fear their Lord, are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); therein are they to dwell (for ever), an entertainment from Allah; and that which is with Allah is the Best for Al-Abraar (the believers of Islamic Monotheism, the pious and righteous)." (Aal 'Imraan 3:107)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p386; and *Sharh 'Aqidah at-Tahawiyyah* p480

﴿تِلْكَ حُدُودُ ٱللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾﴾

"These are the limits (set by) Allah (or ordainments as regards laws of inheritance), and whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad (peace be upon him)] will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and that will be the great success." (An-Nisaa' 4:13)

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقًّا ۚ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ قِيلًا ﴿١٢٢﴾﴾

"But those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do deeds of righteousness, We shall admit them to the Gardens under which rivers flow (i.e. in Paradise) to dwell therein forever. Allah's Promise is the Truth; and whose words can be truer than those of Allah? (Of course, none)."

(An-Nisaa' 4:122)

﴿قَالَ ٱللَّهُ هَٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنفَعُ ٱلصَّٰدِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾﴾

"Allah will say: " This is a Day on which the truthful will profit from their truth: theirs are Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise) - they shall abide therein forever. Allah is pleased with them and they with Him. That is the great success (Paradise)'." (Al-Ma'idah 5:119)

﴿يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُم بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَرِضْوَٰنٍ وَجَنَّٰتٍ لَّهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ
﴿٢١﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥٓ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾﴾

"Their Lord gives them glad tidings of a Mercy from Him, and His being pleased (with them), and of Gardens (Paradise) for them wherein are everlasting delights. They will dwell therein forever. Verily, with Allah is a great reward." (At-Tawbah 9:21-22)

﴿وَعَدَ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِى جَنَّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۚ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

"Allah has promised to the believers - men and women, - Gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of 'Adn (Eden Paradise). But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:72)

﴿وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ وَٱلْأَنصَارِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَٰنٍ
رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى تَحْتَهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾﴾

"And the foremost to embrace Islam of the Muhaajiroon (those who migrated from Makkah to Madinah) and the Ansaar (the citizens of Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhaajiroon) and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success." (At-Tawbah 9:100)

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا۟ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ
ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

"For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah (glorified and exalted be He). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, they will abide therein forever." (Yunus 10:26)

﴿مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ أُكُلُهَا دَآئِمٌ
وَظِلُّهَا ۚ تِلْكَ عُقْبَى ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوا۟ ۖ وَّعُقْبَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ٱلنَّارُ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾

"The description of the Paradise which the Muttaqoon (pious - see V.2:2) have been promised! Underneath it rivers flow, its provision is eternal and so is its shade; this is the end (final destination) of the pious, and the end (final destination) of the disbelievers is Fire." (Ar-Ra'd 13:35)

﴿لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

"No sense of fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave it." [1] (Al-Hijir 15:48)

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ ٱلْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ﴿١٠٧﴾ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا
لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا حِوَلًا ﴿١٠٨﴾﴾

"Verily those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, shall have the Gardens of Al-Firdaws (the Paradise) for their entertainment. "Wherein they shall dwell (forever). No desire will they have for removal therefrom." (Al-Kahf 18:107-108)

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(1) Al-Baghawi wrote in his commentary on this verse: "This is the most explicit verse in the Qur'an on everlastingness of Paradise." (*Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 3/14/404)

﴿وَمَن يَأْتِهِۦ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلدَّرَجَٰتُ ٱلْعُلَىٰ (٧٥) جَنَّٰتُ
عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ (٧٦)﴾

"But whoever comes to Him (Allah) as a believer (in the Oneness of Allah), and has done righteous good deeds, for such are the high ranks (in the Hereafter), - 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), under which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever: such is the reward of those who purify themselves (by abstaining from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which Allah has forbidden and by doing all that Allah has ordained)." (Ta Ha 20:75-76)

﴿قُلْ أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ ٱلْخُلْدِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۚ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَزَآءً وَمَصِيرًا (١٥)
لَّهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَآءُونَ خَٰلِدِينَ ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ وَعْدًا مَّسْـُٔولًا (١٦)﴾

"Say: [O Muhammad (peace be upon him)] "Is that (torment) better or the Paradise of Eternity which is promised to the pious?' It will be theirs as a reward and as a final destination. For them there will be therein all that they desire, and they will abide (there forever). It is a promise binding upon your Lord that must be fulfilled." (Al-Furqaan 25:15-16)

﴿لِّيُدْخِلَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَٱلْمُؤْمِنَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيُكَفِّرَ
عَنْهُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِهِمْ ۚ وَكَانَ ذَٰلِكَ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا (٥)﴾

"That He may admit the believing men and the believing women to Gardens under which rivers flow (i.e. Paradise), to abide therein forever, and He may expiate from them their sins; and that is with Allah a supreme success." (Al-Fat'h 48:5)

﴿ٱدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَٰمٍ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمُ ٱلْخُلُودِ (٣٤)﴾

"Enter you therein in peace and security - this is a Day of eternal life!" (Qaaf 50:31-34)

﴿وَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ قَدْ أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ رِزْقًا (١١)﴾

"And whosoever believes in Allah and performs righteous good deeds, He will admit him into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. Allah has indeed granted for him an excellent provision." (At-Talaaq 65:11)

﴿جَزَآؤُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۖ رَّضِىَ ٱللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ﴾

"Their reward with their Lord is 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (Gardens of Eternity), underneath which rivers flow. They will abide therein forever, Allah will be pleased with them, and they with Him. That is for him who fears his Lord." (Al-Bayyinah 98:8)

All the above verses clearly indicate the eternity and infiniteness of Paradise. There are also in the *Sunnah* abundant proofs on this.

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Ibn 'Umar – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"يَدْخُلُ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْـجَنَّةَ وَأَهْلُ النَّارِ النَّارَ ، ثُمَّ يَقُومُ مُؤَذِّنٌ بَيْنَهُمْ يَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ، لَا مَوْتَ ، وَيَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ ، لَا مَوْتَ خُلُودٌ "

"The people of Paradise will enter Paradise, and the people of the (Hell) Fire will enter the (Hell) Fire: then a call-maker will get up (and make an announcement) among them, 'O the people of the (Hell) Fire! No death anymore! And O people of Paradise! No death (anymore) but Eternity."

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”يُؤْتَى بِالْـمَوتِ كَهيْئَةِ كَبْشٍ أَمْلَحَ ، فَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ : يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ ، فَيَشْرَئِبُّونَ وَيَنْظُرُونَ ، فَيَقُولُ هَلْ تَعْرِفُونَ هَذَا فَيَقُولُونَ: نَعَمْ ، هَذَا الْـمَوْتُ وَكُلُّهُمْ قَدْ رَآهُ . ثُمَّ يُنَادِي: يَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ ، فَيَشْرَئِبُّونَ وَيَنْظُرُونَ فَيَقُولُ :هَلْ تَعْرِفُونَ هَذَا فَيَقُولُونَ: نَعَمْ ، هَذَا الْـمَوْتُ وَكُلُّهُمْ قَدْ رَآهُ فَيُذْبَحُ . ثُمَّ يَقُولُ : يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ ، خُلُودٌ فَلَا مَوْتَ. وَيَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ ، خُلُودٌ فَلَا مَوْتَ“ .

"On the Day of Resurrection Death will be brought forward in the shape of a black and white ram. Then a call maker will call, 'O people of Paradise!' Thereupon they will stretch their necks and look carefully. The caller will say, 'Do you know this?' They will say, 'Yes, this is Death.' By then all of them will have seen it. Then it will be announced again, 'O people of Hell!' They will stretch their necks and look carefully. The caller will say, 'Do you know this?' They will say, 'Yes, this is Death.' And by then all of them will have seen it. Then it (that ram) will be slaughtered and the caller will say, 'O people of Paradise! Eternity for you and no more death! O people of Hell! Eternity for you, and no more death.'"

Imaam Ahmad, At-Tirmidhi and others recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah – may Allah be pleased with him – who narrated that he asked the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, about the structure of Paradise and that he replied:

”لَبِنَةٌ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَلَبِنَةٌ مِن ذَهَبٍ، وَمِلَاطُهَا الْمِسْكُ الْأَذْفَرُ ، وَحَصْبَاؤُهَا اللّؤْلُؤُ وَالْيَاقُوتُ ، وَتُرْبَتُهَا الزَّعْفَرَانُ ، مَنْ دَخَلَهَا يَنْعَمُ وَلَا يَبْأَسُ ، وَيَخْلُدُ وَلَا يَمُوتُ ، لَا تَبْلَى ثِيَابُهُمْ وَلَا يَفْنَى شَبَابُهُمْ“

"It is constructed from a brick of silver and a brick of gold. Its mortar is made of *Adhfar* musk, its pebbles are from pearls and sapphires and its soil is of saffron. Whoever enters it will enjoy bliss and will never experience misery; he will live therein forever and will never die. Garments of its dwellers will never wear out and they will enjoy everlasting youthfulness."

The above *Hadiths* clearly show that Paradise will exist forever. It is only the arrogant, the rebellious and the deviants from the right path who deny this. We seek refuge with Allah from such people and their claims that contradict the divine verses and authentic sayings of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. And we ask Allah for guidance and safety.

* * *

Vessels of the People of Paradise

Allah informs us that there are vessels in Paradise. He says in *Surah* Al-Insaan:

﴿وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِآنِيَةٍ مِّن فِضَّةٍ﴾

"And amongst them will be passed round vessels of silver and cups of crystal." (Al-Insaan 76:15)

The vessels of Paradise have been mentioned in the Qur'an in many verses. These vessels are made of different types as a way of *honor* for the dwellers of Paradise. A mention is made in the Qur'an of three types of vessels of Paradise: trays, cups and jugs. This manifests in the following statements of Allah:

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ﴾

"Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them." (Az-Zukhruf 43:71)

﴿يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ (١٧) بِأَكْوَابٍ﴾

"Immortal boys will go around them (serving); with cups, and jugs." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:17-18)

﴿وَأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ (١٤)﴾

"And cups set at hand." (Al-Ghashiyah 88:14)

In their commentary on this last verse, the scholars of *Tafseer* said that there would be cups set at the edge of the springs of Paradise. Whenever, the dwellers wish to have a drink,(1) they will just find the cups filled with the kind of drink they wish to drink. Some of the commentators, however, believe that the meaning could be that the cups will be placed with the dwellers in their dwellings, palaces and wherever they may be in Paradise.(2)

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 15/30/164

(2) See: *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 5/30/563

As for the substance from which the vessels are made, it is clear from the above verses that they are made from gold and silver. There are many *Hadiths* that substantiate this.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of 'Abdullah ibn Qays, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"جَنَّتَانِ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا ، وَجَنَّتَانِ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا، وَمَا
بَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ وَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا رِدَاءُ الْكِبْرِ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فِي جنَّةِ عَدْنٍ "

"(There will be) two Paradises of silver and all the utensils and whatever is therein (will be of silver); and two Paradises of gold, and its utensils and whatever therein (will be of gold), and there will be nothing to prevent the people from seeing their Lord except the Cover of Majesty over His Face in the Paradise of Eden (eternal bliss)."

They also recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"أَوَّلُ زُمْرَةٍ تَدْخُلُ الْـجَنَّةَ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ ، وَالَّذِينَ عَلَي إِثْرِهِمْ
كَأَشَدِّ كَوْكَبٍ إِضَاءَةً ،قُلُوبُهُمْ عَلَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ لَا اخْتِلَافَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَلَا
تَبَاغُضَ، لِكُـلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ زَوْجَتَانِ، كُلُّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْهُمَا يُرَى مُخُّ سَاقِهَا
مِنْ وَرَاءِ لَحْمِهَا مِنَ الْـحُسْنِ ،يُسَبِّحُونَ اللهَ بُكْرَةً و عَشِيًّا لَا يَسْقَمُونَ وَلَا
يَتَمَخَّطُونَ ،وَلَا يَبْصُقُونَ ، آنِيَتُهُمُ الذَّهَبُ وَالْفِضَّةُ، وَأَمْشَاطُهُمُ الذَّهَبُ
وَوُقُودُ مَجَامِرِهِمُ الْأَلُوَّةُ– قَالَ أَبُو الْيَمَـانِ يَعْنِي الْعُودَ– وَرَشْحُهُمُ الْمِسْكُ"

"The first batch (of people) who will enter Paradise will be (glittering) like a full moon; and those who will enter next will be (glittering) like the brightest star. Their hearts will be as if the heart of a single man, for they will have no enmity amongst themselves, and every one of them shall have two wives, each of whom will be so beautiful, pure and transparent that the marrow of the bones of their legs will be seen through the flesh. They will be glorifying Allah in the morning and evening, and will never fall ill, and they will neither blow their noses, nor spit. Their utensils will be of gold and silver, and their combs will be of gold, and the incense used in their centres will be the aloes-wood, and their sweat will smell like musk."

Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say:

"لَا تَلْبَسُوا الْحَرِيرَ وَلَا الدِّيبَاجَ، وَلَا تَشْرَبُوا فِي آنِيَةِ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ، وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا فِي صِحَافِهَا ، فَإِنَّهَا لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَنَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ"

"Do not wear silk, and do not drink in silver or golden vessels, and do not eat in plates of such metals, for such things are for the unbelievers in this worldly life and for us in the Hereafter." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

While this last *Hadith* clearly indicates that gold and silver will be in Paradise, it explicitly forbids their usage (for Muslims) in the life of this world.

'Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak – may Allah have mercy upon him – recorded in his work *'Az-Zuhd'*, on the authority of Anas bin Malik may Allah be pleased with him – who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"The lowest of all the dwellers of Paradise in grade will be a man who will have ten thousand servants standing at his service, each of them holding a plate of gold and another of silver. Each of the plates will contain a kind of food that is not in another. He will find the last part of the food as much as pleasant and delicious as the first part thereof. (He will neither pass urine nor stool) but only sweat that will smell like musk; and He will neither blow his nose, nor spit." ...

Ornaments of the Dwellers of Paradise

Allah mentions the garments and ornaments that He will bless the dwellers of Paradise with, in a number of verses in the Qur'an. Some are as follows:

﴿ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِّن سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ ۚ نِعْمَ ٱلثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٣١﴾ ﴾

"These! For them will be 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them; therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward! And what an excellent dwelling (resting place)!" (Al-Kahf 18:31)

﴿ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴾

"Truly, Allah will admit those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to Gardens underneath which rivers flow (in Paradise), wherein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls and their garments therein will be of silk." (Al-*Hajj* 22:23)

﴿ عَٰلِيَهُمْ ثِيَابُ سُندُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ ۖ وَحُلُّوٓاْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن فِضَّةٍ وَسَقَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا ﴿٢١﴾ ﴾

"Their garments will be of fine green silk, and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord will give them a pure drink." (Al-Insaan 76:21)

In the above verses, Allah makes a special mention of bracelets as a way of underscoring their beauty.

In this world, the ornaments are worn by women; in Paradise, they will be worn by men and women.

Imaam Ahmad recorded on the authority of Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”لَوْ أَنَّ مَا يُقِلُّ ظُفُرٌ مِمَّا فِي الْـجَنَّةِ بَدَا لَتزخْرَفَتْ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَ خَوَافِقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَوْ أَنَّ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ اطَّلَعَ فَبَدَا سِوَارُهُ لَطَمَسَ ضَوْءُهُ ضَوْءَ الـشَّمْسِ، كَمَا تَطْمِسُ الشَّمْسُ ضَوْءَ النُّجُومِ “

"If a space in Paradise that is as little as the size of a nail is shown in this world, it would be enough to decorate whatever is between the heaven and the earth. If a man form the dwellers of Paradise were to emerge in this world and his bracelet is uncovered, the illumination of that bracelet would definitely obliterate the sunlight as the sunlight obliterate the moonlight."

The Qur'an does not mention anything of the ornaments of the dwellers of Paradise except bracelets. However, other ornaments are mentioned in the *Sunnah*. Al-Miqdam bin Ma'dikarib, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”لِلشَّهِيدِ عِنْدَ اللهِ سِتُّ خِصَالٍ : يُغْفَرُ لَهُ فِي أَوَّلِ دُفْعَةٍ ، وَيَرَى مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ الْـجَنَّةِ ، وَيُجَارُ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَيَأْمَنُ مِنَ الْفَزَعِ الْأَكْبَرِ، وَيُوضَعُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ تَاجُ الْوَقَارِ، الْيَاقُوتَةُ مِنْهَا خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا ، وَيُزَوَّجُ اثْنَتَيْنِ وَسَبْعِينَ زَوْجَةً مِنَ الْحُـورِ [الْعِينِ] ، وَيُشَفَّعُ فِي سَبْعِينَ مِنْ أَقَارِبِهِ “.

"A martyr will enjoy six qualities before Allah (on the Day of Resurrection): He will be forgiven with the first drop of his blood, he will be made to see his position in Paradise, he will be protected against the torment of the grave, he will be secured from the Great Fright, a crown of dignity, a sapphire of which is better than this world and all that is in it; he will also be given seventy-two women in marriage from among the *Al-Hoor Al'Iyn*; and he will be allowed to intercede for seventy of his relatives."

Al-Haakim recorded on the authority Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, recited Allah's statement:

﴿ جَنَّـٰتُ عَدۡنٍ يَدۡخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوۡنَ فِيهَا مِنۡ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٍ ﴾

"'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) will they enter, therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls",[1]

and then said:

”إِنَّ عَلَيْهِمُ التِّيجَانَ إِنَّ أَدْنَى لُؤْلُؤَةٍ مِنْهَا لَتُضِيءُ مَا بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَ الْمَغْرِبِ“

"They will have coronets; the smallest pearl of which is enough to illuminate what is between the east and the west."

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(1) Fatir 35:33

Garments of the Dwellers of Paradise

Allah mentions what He will bestow on His righteous servants of garments in Paradise. He says in *Surah Al-Kahf:*

﴿وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِّن سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ﴾

"Therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk." (Al-Kahf 18:31)

In *Surah* Ad-Dukhaan He says:

﴿يَلْبَسُونَ مِن سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾﴾

"Dressed in fine silk and (also) in thick silk, facing each other." (ad-Dukhaan 44:53)

In *Surah Al-Insaan*, He says:

﴿عَالِيَهُمْ ثِيَابُ سُندُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ﴾

"Their garments will be of fine green silk, and gold embroidery." (Al-Insaan 76:21)

In *Surah Al-Hajj,* He says:

﴿وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

"And pearls and their garments therein will be of silk." (Al-*Hajj* 22:23)

Allah forbids Muslim men from wearing silken garments in this world but He will endow them with it in the everlasting Paradise.

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"الذَّهَبُ وَالْفِضَّةُ وَالْحَرِيرُ وَالدِّيبَاجُ هِيَ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَكُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ"

"Gold, silver and silk are for them (the disbelievers) in this world and for you in the Hereafter."

Al-Bukhari and Muslim also recorded on the authority of 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"لا تَلْبَسُوا الحَرِيرَ، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ لَبِسَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا لَمْ يَلْبَسْهُ فِي الآخِرَةِ"

"Do not wear silk (garments). For, whoever wears it in this world will not wear it in the Hereafter."

It could be understood from one of the above verses that garments of the dwellers of Paradise will be green because that is the best colour and humans feel more comfortable with it than with any other colour.[1] Allah knows best.

Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَنْ عَزَّى أَخَاهُ الْمُؤْمِنَ فِي مُصِيبَتِهِ كَسَاهُ اللهُ حُلَّةً خَضْرَاءَ يُحْبَرُهَا بِهَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ"

"If a person consoles his brother for a calamity that befalls him, Allah will put on him a green garment on account of which he will be envied on the Day of Resurrection." (Recorded by Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadi and Ibn Abi Shaybah)

The Arabs used to say: "Three things drive away sorrow: water, greenery and a beautiful face."[2]

It should be borne in mind that there is no comparison, similarity or relationship whatsoever between the ornaments and garments of this world and those of Paradise. They only thing they share in common are names. It has been earlier mentioned in a *Hadith* that if one of the bracelets of Paradise is shown in this world, its illumination would obliterate the sunlight as sunlight obliterates moonlight.

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(1) See: *Al-Bahr A-Muhit* 6/122

(2) See: *Tafseer Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 5/15/271

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the mother of Harithah came to Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, after Harithah had been martyred on the Day (of the battle) of Badr by an arrow thrown by an unknown person. She said, "O Allah's Messenger! You know the position of Harithah in my heart (i.e. how dear to me he was), so if he is in Paradise, I will not weep for him, or otherwise, you will see what I will do." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

"هَبِلْتِ، أَجَنَّةٌ واحِدَةٌ هِيَ؟ إنَّهَا جِنَانٌ كَثِيرةٌ، وَإنَّهُ فِي الْفِرْدَوْسِ الأَعْلَى "

"Are you mad? Is there only one Paradise? There are many Paradises, and he is in the highest Paradise of *Firdaws*."

The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, added,

"غَدْوَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ الله أَوْ رَوْحَةٍ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا ، وَلَقَابُ قَوْسِ أَحِدِكُمْ أَوْ مَوضِعُ قَدَمٍ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا ، وَلَوْ أَنَّ امْرَأَةً مِنْ نِسَاءِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ اطَّلَعَتْ إِلَى الأَرْضِ لأَضَاءَتْ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَلَمَلأَتْ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا رِيحًا وَلَنَصِيفُهَا - يعني الخِمَارَ - خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا "

"A forenoon journey or an afternoon journey in Allah's Cause is better than the whole world and whatever is in it; and a place equal to an arrow bow of anyone of you, or a place equal to a foot in Paradise is better than the whole world and whatever is in it; and if one of the women of Paradise looked at the earth, she would fill the whole space between them (the earth and the heaven) with light, and would fill whatever is in between them, with perfume, and the veil of her face is better than the whole world and whatever is in it."

The textual evidence in this *Hadith* is that a single veil from Paradise is better than this world and whatever is in it.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Al-Bara ibn 'Azib, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that a piece of silken cloth was given to the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, as a present and the people handed it over amongst themselves and were astonished at its beauty and softness. Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

"أَتَعْجَبُونَ مِنْهَا"

"Are you astonished at it?"

They said, "Yes, O Allah's Messenger!" He said,

"وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَمَنَادِيلُ سَعْدٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا"

"By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, the handkerchiefs of Sa'd in Paradise are better than it." (This is Al-Bukhari's version)

In this *Hadith*, a special mentioning is made of the handkerchiefs because they are contemptible materials that are used for not-so-*honor*able purposes such as cleaning of hands, wiping dust off the body and utensils and covering of materials. In essence, they are made use of as opposed to the garments that are taken care of. Therefore, if this could be the description of a mere handkerchief of Paradise, one could imagine how other garments would be.

There are also *Hadiths* indicating that garments of Paradise will never wear or tear. Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَنْ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ يَنْعَمُ لَا يَبْأَسُ، لَا تَبْلَى ثِيَابُهُ وَلَا يَفْنَى شَبَابُهُ"

"He who would get into Paradise (would be made to enjoy such an everlasting) bliss that he would neither become destitute, nor would his clothes wear out, nor his youth would decline."

At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"يَجِيءُ الْقُرْآنُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَيَقُولُ : يَا رَبِّ حَلِّهِ فَيُلْبَسُ تَاجَ الْكَرَامَةِ، ثُمَّ يَقُولُ يَا رَبِّ زِدْهُ فَيُلْبَسُ حُلَّةَ الْكَرَامَةِ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ : يَا رَبِّ ارْضَ عَنْهُ فَيَرْضَى عَنْهُ، فَيُقَالُ لَهُ : اقْرَأْ وَارْقَ وَتُزَادُ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ حَسَنَةٌ"

"The Qur'an will come on the Day of Resurrection and say, 'My Lord, adorn him.'(1) He will then be adorned with the crown of *honor*. The Qur'an will say, 'My Lord, give him increase.' He will then be adorned with the garment of *honor*. The Qur'an will say, 'My Lord, be pleased with him.' And he will be pleased with. Thereafter, he will be told, 'Recite, and get elevated, and for each verse, you will be increased in reward.'"

Ibn Majah and others recorded on the authority of 'Amr bin 'Azm, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَا مِنْ مُؤْمِنٍ يُعَزِّي أَخَاهُ بِمُصِيبَةٍ، إِلَّا كَسَاهُ اللهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ حُلَلِ الْكَرَامَةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ".

"If a believer consoles his brother for a calamity that befalls him, Allah will clothe him with the garment of *honor* on the Day of Resurrection."

We beseech Allah to bless us out of His boundless mercy for He is the Gracious, the Merciful.

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(1) Meaning: The one who used to recite the Qur'an while he was in this world.

Couches of the Dwellers of Paradise

Allah mentions the couches of Paradise in the glorious Qur'an.

One: In *Surah* Ar-Rahmaan, He says:

﴿ مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍۭ بَطَآئِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۚ وَجَنَى ٱلْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

"Reclining upon the couches lined with silk brocade, and the fruits of the two Gardens will be near at hand." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:54)

In the above verse, Allah explains the linings of these couches and that they are of silk brocade. This indicates the excellent quality of the couches of Paradise. If their linings can be of silk brocade then the exteriors have to more and beautiful.(1) Ibn Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "You have been told about the linings, then imagine how beautiful the externals would be!"(2)

Sa'eed *ibn Jubayr – may Allah have mercy upon him – was asked about the exteriors of the couches and he answered: "Allah only says,*

﴿ فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أُخْفِىَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ ﴾

'No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy.' "(3)

'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – said: "Only their linings were described for you so that your hearts might understand its reality. As for their exteriors, none knows that except Allah."(4)

In the noble verse, Allah calls attention to the nobleness of the couches' exterior by mentioning the beauty of the interior. Their users' reclining on them indicates perfect comfort and bliss.[1]

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 29/127
(2) See: *Jam' al-Bayan* 13/27/149
(3) As-Sajdah 32:17
(4) See: *Zad Al-Maseer* 8/121; *Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 9/17/179

Two: In *Surah* Al-Waqi'ah, Allah describes the couches as being high. He says:

﴿ وَفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ ٣٤ ﴾

"And on couches or thrones, raised high." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:34)

Scholars have varying opinions regarding the meaning of 'highness', in the verse. Some say some of the couches are above others; some say it means high in status while others say it means the couches are raised over bedsteads, therefore, it is physical.

All the three interpretations are probably correct. For, it is clear without any doubt that the couches are high in status; some may be above others and it is likely that the couches are raised above bedsteads. Allah knows best.

From among the furniture of Paradise, it is only cushions, carpets and mattresses that are singled out in mentioning. Cushions and carpets are mentioned in addition to other exotic things that are found in Paradise such as flowing springs, high beds and set cups. Allah says in *Surah* Al-Ghashiyah:

﴿ وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ١٥ وَزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ ١٦ ﴾

"And cushions set in rows. And rich carpets (all) spread out." (Al-Ghashiyah 88:15,16)

And in Surah *Ar-Rahmaan,* He describes the dwellers of Paradise as:

﴿ مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَىٰ رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسَانٍ ٧٦ ﴾

"Reclining on green cushions and rich beautiful mattresses." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:76)

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(1) In addition to the above; see: *Tayseer al-Karim* Ar-Rahmaan 7/256 and *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 27/268

All that is mentioned about the delight and bliss of Paradise are only meant to bring things closer to the understanding of the people of this world. The reality and the essence of these things are known to Allah alone. Therefore, it is a fruitless effort to delve into arguments concerning the nature of the bliss and delight of the Hereafter. It is the kind of understanding ability that a person has that determines how he understands a matter. Humans' understanding is based upon circumstances of this heart and the nature of life in it. When they move to the abode of the Hereafter, the screens will be removed, realities are uncovered, and meanings of the words are changed, and things that are to be and which we do not now know how they are going to be will then be.

Therefore, the purpose of mentioning these descriptions, is to enable man understand– as far as his limited intelligence could carry him – aspects of enjoyment and bliss of Paradise while he is still on this earth. As for the realities of those delights and bliss, they can only be actually understood in the Hereafter; and that is only for those *honor*ed and blessed by Allah through His Mercy.(1) We ask Allah to include us among them.

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(1) See: *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* 6/20/3897

Thrones of the Dwellers of Paradise

Allah mentions thrones in five places in the Qur'an. Some of these are as follows:

﴿أُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّـٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِن
ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِّن سُندُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ ۚ نِعْمَ
ٱلثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا (٣١)﴾

"These! For them will be 'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them; therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafaq (dwelling, resting place.)!" (Al-Kahf 18:31)

﴿إِنَّ أَصْحَـٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلْيَوْمَ فِى شُغُلٍ فَـٰكِهُونَ (٥٥) هُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُهُمْ فِى ظِلَـٰلٍ عَلَى
ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ مُتَّكِـُٔونَ (٥٦)﴾

"Verily, the dwellers of the Paradise, that Day, will be busy with joyful things. They and their wives will be in pleasant shade, reclining on thrones." (Ya Sin 36:55-56)

﴿فَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مِنَ ٱلْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ (٣٤) عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ يَنظُرُونَ (٣٥)﴾

"But this Day (the Day of Resurrection) those who believe will laugh at the disbelievers; on (high) thrones, looking (at all things)." (Al-Mutaffifin 83:34-35)

As for the real description of the thrones of Paradise; its knowledge belongs to Allah alone. Nevertheless, it is far more beautiful and far greater than whatever humans have ever known in the past or in the present or what they will ever know in the future. For, there is in Paradise what no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard and human mind has ever imagined. Therefore, it is impossible for a human being to imagine the reality of these thrones, for it is of things that Allah has concealed from His slaves.(1)

In *Surah* Al-Hijr, Allah says:

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَٰنًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَـٰبِلِينَ (٤٧)﴾

"And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have). (So they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones." (Al-Hijr 15:47)

Some scholars of *Tafseer* believe that this verse was revealed concerning the ten Companions who were given the glad tiding of Paradise.(2)

Al-Hasan Al-Basri narrated on the authority of 'Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said that the verse,

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَٰنًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَـٰبِلِينَ (٤٧)﴾

"And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have)", was revealed concerning them – veterans of the battle of Badr.(3)

At-Tabari also recorded that 'Imran bin Talhah ibn Zubayr entered upon 'Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, after the latter had finished with those who fought against him in the Battle of the Camel and said to him, "I hope that Allah will include me and your father among those He describes as,

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَٰنًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَـٰبِلِينَ (٤٧)﴾

"And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have)."(4)

However, the noble verse generally applies to the people of Paradise because it is the general application of a verse that is reckoned with. This is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Messenger of Allah blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

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(1) See: *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* 6/3859

(2) See: *Tafseer Sufyan Ath-Thawri* p160; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 4/457

(3) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 8/14/36

(4) Ibid.

"يَخْلُصُ الْـمُؤْمِنُونَ مِنَ النَّارِ ، فَيُحْبَسُونَ عَلَى قَنطَرَةٍ بَيْنَ الْـجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ فَيُقَصُّ لِبَعْضِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ مَظَالِمُ كَانَتْ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا ، حَتَّى إِذَا هُذِّبُوا وَنُقُّوا أُذِنَ لَـهُمْ فِي دُخُولِ الْـجَنَّةِ فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ !لَأَحَدُهُمْ أَهْدَى بِمَنْزِلِهِ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِنْهُ بِمَنْزِلِهِ كَانَ فِي الدُّنْيَا"

"The believers, after being saved from the (Hell) Fire, will be stopped at a bridge between Paradise and Hell and mutual retaliation will be established among them regarding wrongs they have committed in the world against one another. After they are cleansed and purified (through the retaliation), they will be admitted into Paradise; and by Him in Whose Hand Muhammad's soul is, everyone of them will know his dwelling in Paradise better than he knew his dwelling in this world."

The *Hadith* perfectly concurs with the noble verse. The Lord of Glory and Majesty will remove from the hearts of the dwellers of Paradise all diseases such as hatred, spite and rancour. They will live in Paradise as brethren with their thrones facing one another. This is what the righteous predecessors such as *Mujahid* and others understood from this verse.⁽¹⁾

It is reported from Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that he said the thrones are made of gold and embedded by crysolite, pearls and ruby.⁽²⁾

Some scholars say that these thrones will turn towards wherever the dwellers of Paradise want them to turn.

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(1) See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 8/14/38; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 3/14/404; and *Tasfeer Ath-Tha'alabi* 2/295

(2) See: *Zad Al-Maseer* 4/404; and *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 5/10/33

Pavilions of the Dwellers of Paradise

A mention is made of pavilion of the dwellers of Paradise in *Surah* Ar-Rahmaan, where Allah says:

﴿حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَٰتٌ فِى ٱلْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٢﴾﴾

"Hoor (beautiful, fair females) guarded in pavilions." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:72)

This noble verse indicates that there are pavilions in Paradise; and this is more clearly explained in the following *Hadith*:

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'ari – amy Allah be pleased with him – that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ خَيْمَةً مِنْ لُؤْلُؤَةٍ مُجَوَّفَةٍ عَرْضُهَا سِتُّونَ مِيلًا، فِي كُلِّ زَاوِيَةٍ مِنْهَا أَهْلٌ مَا يَرَوْنَ الْآخَرِينَ، يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْـمُؤْمِنُونَ"

"In Paradise there is a pavilion made of a single hollow pearl sixty miles wide, in each corner of which there are wives who will not see those in the other corners; and the believers will visit and enjoy them.

And there are two gardens, the utensils and contents of which are made of silver; and two other gardens, the utensils and contents of which are made of so-and-so (i.e. gold) and nothing will prevent the people staying in the Garden of Eden from seeing their Lord except the curtain of Majesty over His Face."

Ahmad recorded on the authority of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"دَخَلْتُ الْـجَنَّةَ، فَإِذَا أَنَا بِنَهْرٍ حَافَتَاهُ خِيَامُ اللُّؤْلُؤِ فَضَرَبْتُ بِيَدِي إِلَى مَا يَجْرِي فِيهِ الْـمَاءُ فَإِذَا مِسْكٌ أَذْفَرُ قُلْتُ : مَا هَذَا يَا جِبْرِيلُ ؟ قَالَ: هَذَا الْكَوْثَرُ الَّذِي أَعْطَاكَهُ اللهُ".

"I entered Paradise and I saw a river whose two edges are pavilions of pearls. I dipped my hand into the flowing water and I found it to be musk. I said to Gabriel, 'What is this?' He said, 'This is the *Kawthar*, which your Lord has endowed you with."

'Umar bin al-Khattaab, Ibn Mas'ood and Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with them all – said: "The pavilions are of hollowed pearls."(1)

Abu Darda', may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The pavilion is a single pearl that has seventy doors and each door is also made of pearl."(2)

As it is well-known, pavilions are regarded as a great delight by the Bedouin Arabs.(3) Rather, it is more precious in their estimation than palaces.

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(1) See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 13/27/160

(2) Kitab Ar-Raqaq by Ibn al-Mubarak p72; and *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* 7/482

(3) See: *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* 6/27/3458

Wives of the Dwellers of Paradise

There are many verses in which Allah mentions wives of the dwellers of Paradise (*Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn*). Some are as follows:

﴿ كَذَٰلِكَ وَزَوَّجْنَٰهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

"So (it will be). And We shall marry them to Hoor (fair female) with wide, lovely eyes." (Ad-Dukhaan 44:54)

﴿ مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوفَةٍ ۖ وَزَوَّجْنَٰهُم بِحُورٍ عِينٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ ﴾

"They will recline (with ease) on thrones arranged in ranks. And We shall marry them to Hoor (female, fair ones) with wide lovely eyes." (At-Toor 52:20)

There are also many *Hadiths* that make mention of them.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said about the dwellers of Paradise:

"لَا يَبُولُونَ وَلَا يَتغَوَّطُونَ ، وَلَا يَتْفِلُونَ وَلَا يَمْتَخِطُونَ ، أَمْشَاطُهُمُ الذَّهَبُ وَرَشْحُهُمُ الْمِسْكُ وَمَجَامِرُهُمُ الْأَلُوَّةُ الْأَلنجُوج:عود الطيب) عُودُ الطِّيبِ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمُ الْـحُورُ الْعِينُ عَلَى خَلْقِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ عَلَى صُورَةِ أَبِيهِمْ آدَمَ ، سِتُّونَ ذِرَاعًا فِي السَّمَاءِ"

"They will not urinate, relieve nature, spit, or have any nasal secretions. Their combs will be of gold, and their sweat will smell like musk. The aloes-wood will be used in their centres. Their wives will be *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn*. All of them will look alike and will resemble their father Adam (in stature), sixty cubits tall."

Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Sa‘eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, mentioned the lowest of the dwellers of Paradise in grade and said, among other things:

“ثُمَّ يَدْخُلُ بَيْتَهُ فَتَدْخُلُ عَلَيْهِ زَوْجَتَاهُ مِنَ الْـحُورِ الْعِينِ ، فَتَقُولَانِ: الْحَـمْدُ لله
الَّذِي أَحْيَاكَ لَـنَا وَأَحْيَانَا لَكَ ، قَالَ :فَيَقُولُ: مَا أُعْطِيَ أَحَدٌمِثْلَ مَا أُعطِيتُ“

“He would then enter his house and his two wives with large and dark eyes would enter after him. They will say: Praise be to Allah, Who has created you for us and us for you. He will say: No one has been given the like of what I have been given.”

At-Tirmidhi and others recorded on the authority of Al-Miqdam ibn Ma’di ykarib, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“لِلشَّهِيدِ عِنْدَ اللهِ ستُّ خِصَالٍ : يُغْفَرُ لَهُ فِي أَوَّلِ دُفْعَةٍ، وَيَرَى مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ
الْـجَنَّةِ، وَيُجَارُ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ– وَيَأْمَنُ مِنَ الْفَزَعِ الْأَكْبَرِ، وَيُوضَعُ عَلَى
رَأْسِهِ تَاجُ الْوَقَارِ الْيَاقُوتَةُ مِنْهَا خَيْرٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا، وَيُزَوَّجُ اثْنَتَيْنِ
وَسَبْعِينَ زَوْجَةً مِنَ الْـحُورِ [الْعِينِ] وَيُشَفَّعُ فِي سَبْعِينَ مِنْ أَقَارِبِهِ“

“The martyr has six blessings with Allah: he will be forgiven from the first drop of blood shed; he will be shown his place in Paradise; he will be protected from the torment of the grave; he will be safe from the greater terror; a crown of dignity will be placed on his head, one ruby of which is better than this world and everything in it; he will be married to seventy-two wives from *Al-Hoor Al-‘Iyn;* and he will intercede for seventy of his relatives.”

Description of the Al-Hoor Al-‘Iyn in the glorious Qur’an:

One: They are described as restraining their glances:

This is shown in the following verses:

﴿وَعِندَهُمۡ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرۡفِ عِينٞ ٤٨﴾

“And beside them will be QaaSiraat-at-Tarf [chaste females (wives)], restraining their glances [desiring none except their husbands)] with wide and beautiful eyes.” (As-Saaffaat 37:48)

﴿وَعِندَهُمۡ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرۡفِ أَتۡرَابٌ ٥٢﴾

“And beside them will be QaaSiraat-at-Tarf [chaste females (wives)] restraining their glances),(desiring none except their husbands) (and) of equal ages.” (Sad 38:52)

﴿فِيهِنَّ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرۡفِ لَمۡ يَطۡمِثۡهُنَّ إِنسٞ قَبۡلَهُمۡ وَلَا جَآنّٞ ٥٦﴾

“Wherein both will be Qaasiraat-ut-Tarf [chaste females (wives)] restraining their glances,) desiring none except their husbands), with whom no man or jinn has had tamth before them.” (Ar-Rahmaan 55:56)

The above verses explain one of the great qualities of *Al-Hoor Al-‘Iyn*: restraining of glances. They women of Paradise cast their gazes only at their husbands; unlike women of this world who look here and there. The pure women of Paradise restrain their glances for their husbands only for they are the only ones they desire. This is the comment of Ibn ‘Abbaas, may Allah be pleased with him, on these verses; and he is supported by Mujahid, Qatadah and others – may Allah have mercy on them all.(1)

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(1) See: *Jami’ Al-Bayan* 12/23/58, 12/23/174; and *Hadi Al-Arwah* p261

This quality also indicates the bashfulness and chastity of these women, and their strong love for their husbands, for none of them would ever raise her head to look at any other man beside her husband. And this is an indicative of the perfect handsomeness of her husband.

Some scholars say: It is the tremendous beauty of the women of Paradise that restrains the glances of their husbands from looking at other women.(1)

Both interpretations are correct. She restrains her glances for her husband alone due to his impressive handsomeness; and the evidence of her striking beauty is that her husband's glances are also restrained for her.(2)

This is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by Muslim on the authority of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ لَسُوقًا يَأْتُونَهَا كُلَّ جُمُعَةٍ فَتَهُبُّ رِيحُ الشَّمَالِ، فَتَحْثُو فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ وَثِيَابِهِمْ فَيَزْدَادُونَ حُسْنًا وَجَمَالاً فَيَرْجِعُونَ إِلَى أَهْلِيهِمْ وَقَدِ ازْدَادُوا حُسْنًا وَجَمَالاً فَيَقُولُ لَـهُمْ : أَهْلُوهُمْ: وَاللهِ لَقَدِ ازْدَدْتُمْ بَعْدَنَا حُسْنًا وَجَمَالاً. فَيَقُولُونَ: وَأَنْتُمْ وَاللهِ لَقَدِ ازْدَدْتُمْ بَعْدَنَا حُسْنًا وَجَمَالاً".

"In Paradise there is a street to which they would come every Friday. The north wind will blow and would scatter fragrance on their faces and on their clothes and would add to their beauty and loveliness, and then they would go back to their family after having an added lustre to their beauty and loveliness, and their family

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 29/129; *Tafseer Ibn Katheer* 7/11 and 7/479; *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 23/89; *Tayseer Al-Karim Al-Rahmaan* 6/378

(2) See: *Tayseer Al-Kareem Al-Rahmaan* 6/378

would say to them: By Allah, you have been increased in beauty and loveliness after leaving us, and they would say: By Allah, you have also increased in beauty and loveliness after us."

The bottom-line is the striking beauty of the dwellers of Paradise and their spouses.

There is another *Hadith* that indicates the love of each of them for another. Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, mentioned the least of the people of Paradise in degree and among what he said about him is:

"ثُمَّ يَدْخُلُ بَيْتَهُ، فَتَدْخُلُ عَلَيْهِ زَوْجَتَاهُ مِنَ الْـحُورِ الْعِينِ، فَتَقُولَانِ: الْـحَمْدُ للهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَاكَ لَنَا وَأَحْيَانَا لَكَ–قَالَ: فَيَقُولُ: مَا أُعْطِيَ أَحَدٌ مِثْلَ مَا أُعْطِيتُ".

"He would then enter his house and his two wives with large and dark eyes would enter after him. They will say: Praise be to Allah, Who has created you for us and us for you. He will say: No one has been given the like of what I have been given."

As for the place where these beautiful women will restrain their glances, it is pavilions as indicated in Allah's statement:

﴿حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَٰتٌ فِى ٱلْخِيَامِ﴾

"Hoor (beautiful, fair females) guarded in pavilions."
(Ar-Rahmaan 55:72)

What this means, according to Mujahid, is that the *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn* will not go out of their pavilions (if there is no need to). They will not be like the women of this world who roam about streets and market places. They will *honor*ably stay with their husbands.(1)

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/27/160

The fact that the place where the *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn* will restrain their glances is pavilion is the *Hadith* recorded by Muslim that Abu Bakr ibn Abdullah bin Qays reported on the authority of his father that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: "In Paradise, there would be for a believer a tent of a single hollowed pearl the breadth of which would be sixty miles. It would be meant for a believer and the believers would go around it and none would be able to see the others."

In the light of the above verses and *Hadiths*, the women of Paradise are described as chaste, pure, protected and not revealing their beauties. However, their restraining their glances for their husbands in the pavilions does not necessarily mean that they will not go out at all. Whenever they want to go out to gardens and parks for amusement, they will not be prevented from doing so. Though they are primarily restrained in the pavilions, whenever they need to go out, they will do so.(1) Allah knows best.

Two: Women of Paradise are described as of equal ages:

Allah says:

﴿وَعِندَهُمْ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ أَتْرَابٌ (٥٢)﴾

"And beside them will be Qaasiraat-at-Tarf (chaste females (wives) restraining their glances (desiring none except their husbands)) (and) of equal ages." (Sad 38:52)

﴿إِنَّآ أَنشَأْنَٰهُنَّ إِنشَآءً (٣٥) فَجَعَلْنَٰهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا (٣٦) عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا (٣٧)﴾

"Verily, We have created them (maidens) of special creation; and made them virgins. Loving (their husbands only), (and) of equal age." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:35-37)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p263

﴿إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا (٣١) حَدَآئِقَ وَأَعْنَٰبًا (٣٢) وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا (٣٣)﴾

"Verily, for the Muttaqoon, there will be a success (Paradise); Gardens and vineyards, and young full-breasted (mature) maidens of equal age." (An-Naba' 78:31-33)

The above verses indicate that they are beautiful young women; neither old women nor minors. Their age will in the range of thirty-three, for this is the average age of youthfulness, beauty and perfect physical built. Women of the same age usually get along better with one another and love one another more. Their being in Paradise will keep them away from undesirable traits such as jealousy, rancour and misgivings.(1)

Imaam Ahmad recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"يَدْخُلُ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْـجَنَّةَ جُرْدًا مُرْدًا بِيضًا جِعَادًا، مُكَحَّلِينَ أَبْنَاءَ ثَلَاثٍ وَثَلَاثِينَ، عَلَى خَلْقِ آدَمَ سِتُّونَ ذِرَاعًا، فِي عَرْضِ سَبْعِ أَذْرُعٍ".

"The dwellers of Paradise will enter it as flawless, stunningly handsome and beardless young men with curly hairs, wearing kohl. Their ages will be thirty-three. All of them will look alike and will resemble their father Adam (in shape and appearance), sixty cubits tall."

Three: They are described as purified women

Allah says:

﴿وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى رُزِقْنَا مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَأُتُوا۟ بِهِۦ مُتَشَٰبِهًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَآ أَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ (٢٥)﴾

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p261; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 4/23; *Tayseer Al-Kareem Ar-Rahmaan* 7/555

"And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say: "This is what we were provided with before," and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste) and they shall have therein Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives) and they will abide therein forever'." (al-Baqarah 2:25)

﴿ قُلْ أَؤُنَبِّئُكُم بِخَيْرٍ مِّن ذَٰلِكُمْ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِى مِن
تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَٰجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَٰنٌ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ
بَصِيرٌۢ بِٱلْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾ ﴾

"Say: "Shall I inform you of things far better than those? For Al-Muttaqoon (the pious - see V.2:2) there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home) and Azwaajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives). And Allah will be pleased with them. And Allah is All-Seer of the (His) slaves'." (Aal 'Imraan 3:15)

It is noted in the above verses that Allah has endowed great blessings upon His righteous servants such as gardens, rivers and eternal life in Paradise. However great these blessings may be, they cannot be complete without wives who can provide company and happiness. Therefore, Allah provided them with purified women.[1]

Allah describes the women of Paradise with a single and comprehensive description that covers all qualities that are desired in women. This description is purity; and it includes purity from all kinds of situations that women are prone to in this world such as menstruation, post-natal bleeding, urination, defecation,

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 7/200

spitting, nasal mucus, and sexual discharge among other things that are naturally irritating.[1]

It has been reported from Ibn 'Abbaas, Ibn Mas'ood and other Companions – may Allah be pleased with them – that the women of Paradise neither menstruate nor urinate or defecate or have nasal mucus.[2]

This is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said about the dwellers of Paradise: "They will not urinate, relieve nature, spit, or have any nasal secretions. Their combs will be of gold, and their sweat will smell like musk. The aloes-wood will be used in their centres."

The women of Paradise are also purified from all objectionable manners and despicable actions that are either adopted or inherited as a result of bad lineage and corrupted upbringing. They will neither be jealous nor spiteful; and they will not look at other men beside their husbands.[3]

The fact that women of Paradise are described as purified indicates that no physical, moral, or psychological imperfection can be found in them. It also indicates that there is a purifier for them and that cannot be but Allah alone. He has purified them from all that could blemish them. He gave them an excellent preparation and perfectly beautified them for those who deserve reward and *honor* from among His righteous servants.[4]

This purity encompasses *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn* and other women who will enter Paradise. All of them will be wives of the believers.

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(1) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 1/395-396; *Hadi Al-Arwah* p258; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 1/91

(2) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 1/395

(3) See: *Al-Kash-shaf* 1/262; *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 7/200; and *Zad Al-Maseer* 1/53

(4) See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 1/233; *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 1/150; *Al-Kash-shaf* 1/262; and *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 2/130

For, there will not be any bachelor or spinster in Paradise. Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"وَمَا فِي الْـجَنَّةِ أَعْزَبُ"

"And there will not be any bachelor (or spinster) in Paradise."

In the Qur'an Allah likens*Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn* to three things:They are likened to well-preserved eggs:

﴿ وَعِندَهُمْ قَٰصِرَٰتُ ٱلطَّرْفِ عِينٌ ﴿٤٨﴾ كَأَنَّهُنَّ بَيْضٌ مَّكْنُونٌ ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾

"And beside them will be Qaasiraat-at-Tarf [chaste females (wives), restraining their glances (desiring none except their husbands)] with wide and beautiful eyes. (Delicate and pure) as if they were (hidden) eggs (well) preserved." (As-Saaffaat *37:48-49)*

The scholars have different interpretations for this.

Saee'd bin Jubayr said: "They are likened to egg-white that is still inside the shell and has not been touched by any hand."

Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – said: "It means: like preserved pearl in its whiteness. So they are likened to the pearls in whiteness and purity."

'Ata said: "They are likened to egg-white."

At-Tabari is of the view that the whiteness of the women of Paradise is likened to that of egg that is still in its shell. This is undoubtedly the preserved thing. It is of Arab's habit to call everything that is under protection a preserved thing whether it is a pearl, egg or property.⁽¹⁾ Allah knows best.

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(1) See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 12/23/56; *Tafseer Al-Mawardi* 2/413; *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/12

They are likened to rubies and coral.

Allah says in *Surah* Ar-Rahmaan:

﴿ كَأَنَّهُنَّ ٱلْيَاقُوتُ وَٱلْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾ ﴾

"(In beauty) they are like rubies and coral." (Ar-Rahmaan 55:58)

In the above verse, Allah likens the women of Paradise, in purity, to rubies whose inside thread is seen from outside. Bodies of these women are so pure that the marrow of their legs is seen through their flesh. Their beauty and whiteness is also likened to the whiteness of the coral.⁽¹⁾

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"أَوَّلُ زُمْرَةٍ تَدْخُلُ الْـجَنَّةَ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ، وَالَّذِينَ عَلَى آثَارِهِمْ كَأَحْسَنِ كَوْكَبٍ دُرِّيٍّ فِي السَّمَاءِ إِضَاءَةً، قُلُوبُهُمْ عَلَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ لَا تَبَاغُضَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَلَا تَحَاسُدَ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ زَوْجَتَانِ مِنَ الْـحُورِ الْعِينِ، يُرَى مُخُّ سُوقِهِنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْعَظْمِ وَاللَّحْمِ"

"The first batch (of people) who will enter Paradise will be (glittering) like a full moon; and those who will enter next will be (glittering) like the brightest star. Their hearts will be as if the heart of a single man, for they will have no enmity amongst themselves, and every one of them shall have two wives, each of whom will be so beautiful, pure and transparent that the marrow of the bones of their legs will be seen through the flesh."

Muslim's version is:

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/27/152; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/479

"إِنَّ أَوَّلَ زُمْرَةٍ تَدْخُلُ الْـجَنَّةَ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ، وَالَّتِى تَلِيهَا عَلَى أَضْوَإِ كَوْكَبٍ دُرِّىٍّ فِى السَّمَاءِ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ زَوْجَتَانِ اثْنَتَانِ، يُرَى مُخُّ سُوقِهِمَا مِنْ وَرَاءِ اللَّحْمِ، وَمَا فِى الْـجَنَّةِ أَعْزَبُ".

"The (members) of the first group to get into Paradise would have their faces as bright as full moon during the night, and the next to this group would have their faces as bright as the shining stars in the sky, and every person would have two wives and the marrow of their shanks would glimmer beneath the flesh and there would be none without a wife in Paradise."

Another version by Muslim reads:

"وَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمْ زَوْجَتَانِ يُرَى مُخُّ سُوقِهِمَا مِنْ وَرَاءِ اللَّحْمِ مِنَ الْـحُسْنِ"

"And every person would have two wives and the marrow of their shanks would glimmer beneath the flesh and there would be none without a wife in Paradise."

'Abdullah bin Mas'ood, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "A woman from among the dwellers of Paradise will put on seventy silken shirts, yet the whiteness and beauty of her leg will be seen through those garments. That is because Allah says:

﴿كَأَنَّهُنَّ ٱلْيَاقُوتُ وَٱلْمَرْجَانُ ۝٥٨﴾

'(In beauty) they are like rubies and coral.'"

Songs of the women of Paradise

There are authentic *Hadiths* indicating that women of Paradise have songs they will sing there. Ibn 'Umar – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"The women of Paradise will sing for their husbands with a beautiful voice that has never been heard before. One of their songs shall be: 'We are the most beautiful women, wives of *honor*able people; we are comfort of their eyes.' They will also sing: 'We are everlasting women that will never die, we are secured women that will never know fear and we are abiding here forever and we will never leave here.'" (Recorded by At-Tabarani)

As for their jealousy, it is mentioned in the *Sunnah* that women of Paradise will not be jealous of her rivals in Paradise; she is only jealous of her rival that bothers her husband while he are still on this earth. Ahmad and others recorded on the authority of Mu 'adh ibn Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"لَا تُؤْذِي امْرَأَةٌ زَوْجَهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا قَالَتْ زَوْجَتُهُ مِنَ الْـحُورِ الْعِينِ لَا تُؤْذِيهِ، قَاتَلَكِ اللهُ، فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ عِنْدَكِ دَخِيلٌ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يُفَارِقَكِ إِلَيْنَا"

"If any woman bothers her husband in this world, his wife from among the women of Paradise will say: 'Do not bother him, may Allah punish you! He is only a visitor of yours. He will soon leave you and join us!"

Why marriage in Paradise?

Someone may ask: What is the logical reason for people marrying one another in Paradise? One of the best answers to this question is the one volunteered by Shaykh Muhammad Rashid Ridha. He writes:

"The stages of the life of the Hereafter are higher and more perfect than the stages of life of this world. We know that the real enjoyment and fruit of marriage is procreation, while in the Hereafter no procreation is intended. Therefore, the sweetness of marriage and Companionship between a man and a woman in Paradise should be higher, more purposeful and have greater wisdom. Though we believe in this, we cannot delve into its reality, for the life of the seen cannot be regarded as criterion for judging the life of the unseen. This does not, however, contradict the fact that man will, in the Hereafter remain human and not angel. It is only that his human enjoyment will be far greater than the one he enjoyed in the life of this world and freer of imperfection. And among these enjoyments are food and marital intercourse."[1]

There are verses in the Qur'an that indicate this kind of marital enjoyment. Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلْيَوْمَ فِى شُغُلٍ فَٰكِهُونَ ۝٥٥ هُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُهُمْ فِى ظِلَٰلٍ عَلَى ٱلْأَرَآئِكِ مُتَّكِـُٔونَ ۝٥٦﴾

"Verily, the dwellers of the Paradise, that Day, will be busy with joyful things. They and their wives will be in pleasant shade, reclining on thrones." (Ya Sin 36:55-56)

Allah also says:

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[1] See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 1/234

﴿ٱدْخُلُوا۟ ٱلْجَنَّةَ أَنتُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ ۝٧٠﴾

"Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness." (Az-Zukhruf 43:70)

There are also *Hadiths* that implicitly indicate this. Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'ari, may Allah be pleased with him,that Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said:

"إِنَّ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ فِى الْـجَنَّةِ لَخَيْمَةً مِنْ لُؤْلُؤَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ مُجَوَّفَةٍ، طُولُهَا سِتُّونَ مِيلًا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ فِيهَا أَهْلُونَ، يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْـمُؤْمِنُ، فَلَا يَرَى بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا".

"In Paradise, there would be for a believer a tent of a single hollowed pearl the breadth of which would be sixty miles. It would be meant for a believer and the believers would go around it and none would be able to see the others."

And it is explicitly mentioned in other *Hadiths*. At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"يُعْطَى الْـمُؤْمِنُ في الْـجَنَّةِ قُوَّةَ كَذَا وَكَذَا مِنَ الْجِمَاعِ قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ أَوَ يُطِيقُ ذَلِكَ ؟ قَالَ يُعْطَى قُوَّةَ مِائَةٍ"

"In Paradise, a believer will be given the sexual power of such and such." The Companions said, "Messenger of Allah, will he be capable of that?" He answered, "Yes, he will be given the strength of one hundred men."

Therefore, it is expected of whoever hears these great descriptions to endeavour and not to leave any stone unturned in ensuring that he attains Paradise. He should also know that it is only those who suppress their anger who will be given the privilege of choosing from *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn*, as it is authentically established in the *Sunnah*. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مَنْ كَظَمَ غَيْظًا وَهُوَ قَادِرٌ عَلَى أَنْ يُنْفِذَهُ ، دَعَاهُ اللهُ عَلَى رُءُوسِ الْـخَلَائِقِ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، حَتَّى يُخَيِّرَهُ فِي أَيِّ الْـحُورِ شَاءَ"

"He who suppresses his anger while he is able to vent it will be called in the presence of the entire creation on the Day of Resurrection and asked to choose of *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn* the ones he likes." (Recorded by Ibn Majah)

We beseech Allah to bestow upon us *honor* and success out of His infinite Mercy and not to deprive us of *Al-Hoor Al-'Iyn* in Paradise of Bliss.

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Chapter Four

Provision of the Dwellers of Paradise

Types of Springs of Paradise and Reason of Their Differences

Allah mentions springs in the Qur'an in a general form with the exception of *Kawthar* which is given to the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and specifically mentioned by name. However, the *Sunnah* has explained that Nile, Euphrates, Sayhan and Jayhan are among the rivers of Paradise, as indicated in the *Hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah – may Allah be pleased with him. In the *Hadith*, the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "Sayhan, Jayhan, Euphrates and Nile are all among the rivers of Paradise." (Recorded by Ahmad and Muslim)

Perhaps, this *Hadith* is suggesting that these rivers originate from Paradise. As such, this does not contradict the fact that these rivers originated from well-known sources in the earth. If, however, the *Hadith* suggests otherwise, then it should be regarded as a part of knowledge of the unseen that must only be believed and whose informer (Muhammad – blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) must be given full submission.(1) This is in line with Allah's injunction:

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(1) See: *Silsilah Al-AHadith As-Sahihah* by Shaykh Muhammad Nasirud-deen Al-Albani 1/178

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٦٥﴾﴾

"But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you [O Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission." (An-Nisaa' 4:65)

Types of the rivers of Paradise

All the verses in which rivers of Paradise are mentioned do not explain the kinds of these rivers except one verse. It is Allah's statement:

﴿مَّثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"The description of Paradise which the pious have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed, rivers of milk of which the taste never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of clarified honey (clear and pure) therein for them is every kind of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. (Are these) like those who shall dwell forever in the Fire and be given to drink boiling water so that it cuts up their bowels?" (Muhammad 47:15)

Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of Haakim bin

Mu'awiyah from his father who said that he heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say:

"إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ بَحْرَ الْمَاءِ ، وَبَحْرَ الْعَسَلِ ، وَبَحْرَ اللَّبَنِ ، وَبَحْرَ الْخَمْرِ ، ثُمَّ تَشَقَّقُ الْأَنْهَارُ مِنْهَا بَعْدَهُ"

"There are in Paradise, a river of water, a river of honey, a river of milk and a river of wine. And other rivers will then originate from them."

Rivers of water will originate from the spring of water, rivers of milk will originate from the spring of milk, rivers of honey will originate from the spring of honey and rivers of wine will originate from the spring of honey.[1]

This is how these rivers are the origins of all other rivers and seas. And Allah knows best.

The above verse is an explanatory continuation of a preceding verse in the same *Surah*. The verse is:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ﴾

"Certainly! Allah will admit those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise)." (Muhammad 47:12)

Allah, High and Exalted, mentioned Gardens and flowing of rivers from their beneath. As if the minds of humans are longing for these Gardens, Allah gives them an example of the Gardens. In doing so, He specifically mentions the kinds of its rivers[2], which are:

One: Rivers whose smell and taste do not change. Its water remains in the same state upon which Allah has created it; its taste and smell will never change however long it may be. They are rivers, whose water is sweet and clean. It turns neither muddy nor smelly.

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[1] See: *Hayah Ahlil-Jannah* by Mahmud Shalabi p170

[2] See: *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 9/26/47; and *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 26/94

Two: Rivers of milk that never changes in taste. Allah created this milk originally from the rivers of Paradise. It will ever remain on its primary state without any change in taste; as opposed to the milk of this world that is derived from udders. However long it stays, it will ever remains natural and fresh as it was when it was first created. It never goes sour or tasteless. It is forever exceptionally delicious, white and nice.(1)

Three: Rivers of wine delicious to those who drink it. The dwellers of Paradise will enjoy drinking it. It is never soiled by human hands or legs, as opposed to the wine of this world. It looks good, tastes great and smells nice. It neither intoxicates nor does it have offensive smell. In fact, it is free of any flaw one can think of; it is an absolutely pure enjoyment. It is enough a quality for it that Allah describes it with the following descriptions:

﴿ بَيْضَآءَ لَذَّةٍ لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنزَفُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ ﴾

"White, delicious to the drinkers. Neither will they have Ghoul (any kind of hurt, abdominal pain, headache, a sin) from that, nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom." (As-Saaffaat 37:46,47)

Allah also says:

﴿ لَّا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنزِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ ﴾

"Wherefrom they will get neither any aching of the head, nor any intoxication." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:19)

Describing the wine of Paradise as delicious to the drinkers is because wine normally has undesirable taste. Hence there is

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(1) See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 13/26/49; *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 8/16/237; *al-Kash-shaf* 3/534; *Tafseer al-Baydawi* 2/402; and *Tafseer An-Nasafi* 2/4/152

need to explain that the wine of Paradise is different from that of this world in this aspect.(1)

Four: Rivers of purified honey. This honey is free of all particles and all other defects for which the honeys of this world are known. It is not a product of honeybees that always has wax and residues from which the honey needs to be purified. It is rather created from the beginning like, flowing like water; unblemished, extremely pure, having beautiful colour, excellent taste and pleasant smell.(2)

Pondering over the kinds of these four rivers will make one realize that Allah, High and Exalted cited the types of drinks known and usually enjoyed in this world as examples for the drinks of Paradise. However, Allah made it clear that nothing of the imperfections peculiar with the drinks of this world could be found in the drinks of Paradise. The defect of water is that it changes after staying still for a long time, the defect of milk is that it goes sour, the defect of wine is its tastelessness and many evils and calamities it brings upon its drinkers and the defect of honey is its many particles and residues.(3)

Allah describes these drinks in a way that indicates their abundance and continuous flow. He calls them rivers.(4)

Using the word, 'rivers' to describe flowing waters in this world is something no one disputes. As for using it to describe milk, wine and honey is only one of the situations of the Hereafter that a Muslim is obliged to have absolute belief in, without any doubt whatsoever.(5)

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 28/55

(2) See: *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 8/16/237; *Tafseer An-Nasafi* 2/4/152; *Jami' al-Bayan* 13/26/50; *Zad Al-Maseer* 7/401; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/295

(3) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 28/54; *Tafseer al-Baydawi* 2/402; *Ruh al-Ma'ani* 9/26/48; and *Hadi Al-Arwah* p218

(4) See: *Tafseer al-Baydawi* 2/403; and *Ruh al-Ma'ani* 9/26/48

(5) See: *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 26/96

Why the rivers are of different kinds?

The kinds of rivers of Paradise mentioned in the Qur'an are among things over which humans vie with one another in this world. They are among the most precious thing one can attain. So, having them at one's disposal is an indication of the enjoyment that wealthy and influential individuals have in this world. If water in this world is for drinking and cleaning, the milk is for food and nourishment, the wine is for imaginary enjoyment and honey is for cure and other benefits, the only reason for the difference in the kinds of drinks the people will have in Paradise is increase in delight and pure enjoyment. They will not take these drinks either for the purpose of staying alive or for healing or any benefits. For, they will already be living an eternal life in which there is neither disease nor fatigue or hunger or thirst. It is a life of endless bliss and delight.

This noble verse gives us a great physical illustration of the kinds of delight and punishments and kinds of enjoyment and pains that righteous and the unrighteous will respectively have on the Day of Resurrection.(1)

It gives a detailed explanation of the rivers of Paradise and different kinds of fruits, and forgiveness that Allah has prepared for the righteous. The verse ends with strong rebuke for the dwellers of Hell who will be fed painfully hot water that will break their bowels, thereby underlying the great difference and absence of any comparison between the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell.(2)

May Allah protect us from the torment of Hell. He is All-Hearer, Answerer to supplications; and He has power over all things.

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p219; *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 9/26/48; and *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* 6/3291

(2) See: *Aysar At-Tafaseer* 4/250

Fruits of Paradise

There are verses in the Qur'an indicating the existence of fruits in Paradise. One of these verses is Allah's statement:

﴿وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمۡ جَنَّٰتٖ تَجۡرِي مِن تَحۡتِهَا
ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُواْ مِنۡهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٖ رِّزۡقٗا قَالُواْ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِي رُزِقۡنَا مِن قَبۡلُۖ
وَأُتُواْ بِهِۦ مُتَشَٰبِهٗاۖ ٢٥﴾

"And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say:' This is what we were provided with before,' and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste)." (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

Fruits of Paradise are mentioned in a number of Prophet's sayings. Muslim recorded on the authority of Jabir bin 'Abdullah – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – who narrated that the sun eclipsed during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, on that very day when Ibraheem (the Prophet's son) died. The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, stood up and led people in (two *rak'ahs* of) prayer with six *ruku*'s and four prostrations. He commenced (the prayer) with *Takbeer* (*Allahu Akbar)* and then recited and prolonged his recital. He then bowed nearly the (length of time) that he stood up. He then raised his head from the *ruku'* and recited but less than the first recital. He then bowed (to the length of time) that he stood up. He then raised his head from the *ruku'* and again recited but less than the second recital. He then bowed (to the length of time) then he stood up. He then lifted his head from the *ruku'*. He then fell in prostration and observed two prostrations. He stood up and then bowed, observing six *ruku*'s like it, without (completing) the *rak'ah* in them, except (this difference) that the first (*qiyam* of *ruku'*) was longer than the later one, and the *ruku'* was nearly (of the same length) as prostration. He then moved backward and the rows behind him also moved backward till we reached the extreme (Abu Bakr said: till he reached near the women) He then moved forward and the people also moved forward along with him till he stood at his (original) place (of worship). He then completed the prayer as it was required to complete and the sun brightened and he said: O people! Verily the sun and the moon are among the signs of Allah and they do not eclipse at the death of anyone among people (Abu Bakr said: On the death of any human being). So when you see anything like it (of the nature of eclipse), pray till it is bright. There is nothing which you have been promised (in the next world) but I have seen it in this prayer of mine. Hell was brought to me as you saw me moving back on account of fear lest its heat might affect me; and I saw the owner of the curved staff who dragged his intestines in the fire, and he used to steal (the belongings) of the pilgrims with his curved staff. If he (the owner of the staff) became aware, he would say: It got (accidentally) entangled in my curved staff, but if he was unaware of that, he would take that away. I also saw in it (in Hell) the owner of a cat whom she had tied and did not feed her nor set her free so that she could eat the creatures of the earth, till the cat died of starvation.

"ثُمَّ جِيءَ بِالْـجَنَّةِ وَذَلِكُمْ حِينَ رَأَيْتُمُونِي تَقَدَّمْتُ حَتَّى قُمْتُ فِي مَقَامِي وَلَقَدْ مَدَدْتُ يَدِي وَأَنَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَتَنَاوَلَ مِنْ ثَمَرِهَا لِتَنْظُرُوا إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ بَدَا لِي أَنْ لَا أَفْعَلَ"

Paradise was brought to me, and it was on that occasion that you saw me moving forward till I stood at my place (of worship). I stretched my hand as I wanted to catch hold of its fruits so that you may see them. Then I thought of not doing it."

Imaam Ahmad recorded on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Al-'Aas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that a

man came to the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and said: "Messenger of Allah, tell me about the garments of the dwellers of Paradise; are they created or woven (like any other textile material)?" Some of the people in attendance broke into laughter. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"مِمَّ تَضْحَكُونَ مِنْ جَاهِلٍ يَسْأَلُ عَالِماً؟ ثُمَّ أَكَبَّ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَيْنَ السَّائِلُ؟ قَالَ: هُوَذَا أَنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ قَالَ: لَا بَلْ تَشَقَّقُ عَنْهَا ثَمَرُ الْجَنَّةِ".

"Why are you laughing at an ignorant man asking from a knowledgeable person?" He then asked for the questioner. When he was shown to him, he faced him and said: "The fruits of Paradise sprout from their garments." He said so three times.

Hanad recorded in his work '*Az-Zuhd*', on the authority of Jarir ibn 'Abdullah Al-Bajali who narrated that Salman Al-Farisi – may Allah be pleased with both of them – said to him: "Jarir, humble yourself before Allah. For, whoever humbles himself before Allah in this world, Allah, High and Exalted, will elevate him on the Day of Resurrection. Jarir, do you know what darkness is? It is injustice that people commit against one another in this world." Jarir continued: "Salman then took a small stick that I hardly saw between his fingers and said: "Jarir, if you look for a plant that is as small as this stick in Paradise you will not find it." Jarir inquired: "Then where will be the palms, trees and fruits?" Salman answered: "Their origin is pearl and gold, and their topmost will be fruits."

The fruits of Paradise are not only many, they are also considerably big. This fact is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated: Once the Prophet was narrating (a story), while a Bedouin was sitting with him:

”إِنَّ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ اسْتَأْذَنَ رَبَّهُ فِي الزَّرْعِ فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَلَسْتَ فِيمَا شِئْتَ قَالَ: بَلَى وَلَكِنِّي أُحِبُّ أَنْ أَزْرَعَ، قَالَ: فَبَذَرَ فَبَادَرَ الطَّرْفَ نَبَاتُهُ وَاسْتِوَاؤُهُ وَاسْتِحْصَادُهُ فَكَانَ أَمْثَالَ الْجِبَالِ فَيَقُولُ اللهُ: دُونَكَ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُشْبِعُكَ شَيْءٌ، فَقَالَ الْأَعْرَابِيُّ: وَاللهِ لَا تَجِدُهُ إِلَّا قُرَشِيًّا أَوْ أَنْصَارِيًّا فَإِنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ زَرْعٍ وَأَمَّا نَحْنُ فَلَسْنَا بِأَصْحَابِ زَرْعٍ“

“One of the inhabitants of Paradise will ask Allah to allow him to cultivate the land. Allah will ask him, ‘Are you not living in the pleasures you like?’ He will say, ‘Yes, but I like to cultivate the land.’ “The Prophet added, “ When the man (will be permitted he) will sow the seeds and the plants will grow up and get ripe, ready for reaping and so on till it will be as huge as mountains within a wink. Allah will then say to him, ‘O son of Adam! Take here you are, gather (the yield); nothing satisfies you.’ On that, the Bedouin said,‘ The man must be either from Quraish (i.e. an emigrant) or an *Ansaar*i, for they are farmers, whereas we are not farmers.” The Prophet smiled (at this).

One of the characteristics of the fruits of Paradise is that they are brought within the reach of the dwellers. Allah says:

﴿وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلَالُهَا وَذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَذْلِيلًا ﴿١٤﴾﴾

“And the shade thereof is close upon them, and the bunches of fruit thereof will hang low within their reach.” (Al-Insaan 76:14)

When a dweller wants to eat any of the fruits, he will just pick it in whatever position he is whether standing, sitting or reclining. Nothing would stand between him and whatever fruit he wants.(1)

Some scholars reported Mujahid to have said: “When a dweller of Paradise wants to have a fruit while he is in standing position, the fruit reaches up to him; if he is in sitting position, the fruit lowers itself to his reach; and if he is in reclining position, the fruit comes down to his reach. That is the meaning of Allah’s statement, *‘the bunches of fruit thereof will hang low within their reach’.”*(1)

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(1) See: *Jami’ Al-Bayan* 14/29/61’ and *Tafseer al-Qur’an Al-‘Azeem* 8/241

The dwellers of Paradise sometimes will eat fruits while in reclining position. This is due to Allah’s statement:

﴿مُتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَٰكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَشَرَابٍ ﴿٥١﴾﴾

“Therein they will recline; therein they will call for fruits in abundance and drinks.” (Sad 38:51)

This is an indication of their perfect enjoyment and extreme comfort.(2)

However, eating in this position is not desirable in this world. This is due to the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Juhayfah, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“ ”

“I do not eat in reclining position.”

The undesirability of eating in reclining position in this world is due to the fact that it is the habit of ignorant and affluent ones that has its origin from non-Muslim kings of pre-Islamic era.(3) As for Paradise, eating in this position is a manifestation of increased enjoyment, comfort and delight.

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(1) Ibid.
(2) See: *Tayseer Al-Kareem Al-Rahmaan* 6/432
(3) See: *Fath Al-Bari* 9/543

Security of the dwellers of Paradise and infinity of their delight:

The dwellers of Paradise will feel secured concerning the fruit they will eat in Paradise. This is evidenced by Allah's statement:

﴿يَدۡعُونَ فِيهَا بِكُلِّ فَٰكِهَةٍ ءَامِنِينَ ٥٥﴾

"They will call therein for every kind of fruit in peace and security." (Ad-Duhaan 44:55)

They will have absolute assurance that the fruits they will eat in Paradise will never finish. They will also eat them with absolute assurance they will not harm them in any way. The fruits will never cause them any disease or pain. There is a verse in *Surah* Al-Waqi'ah that explicitly mentions that fruits of Paradise shall be in perpetual supply. Allah says:

﴿وَفَٰكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ ٣٢ لَّا مَقۡطُوعَةٍ وَلَا مَمۡنُوعَةٍ ٣٣﴾

"And fruit in plenty, whose supply is not cut off (by change of season), nor are they out of reach." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:32,33)

This is unlike the fruits of this world whereby the fruits of winter are in short supply in summer and the fruits of summer are in short supply in winter. By their mere wish to eat of the fruits of Paradise, they will have it supplied to them without any difficulty.(1) Allah says:

﴿وَأَمۡدَدۡنَٰهُم بِفَٰكِهَةٍ وَلَحۡمٍ مِّمَّا يَشۡتَهُونَ ٢٢﴾

"And We shall provide them with fruit and meat, such as they desire." (At-Toor 52:22)

All that is in Paradise have no counterpart in this world but

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/27/185

only in names.

All that the dwellers of Paradise shall enjoy of provision, fruits and great delight are just a manifestation of *honor* that their Lord will confer on them on that Day. Allah says:

﴿أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ رِزۡقٞ مَّعۡلُومٞ ٤١ فَوَٰكِهُۖ وَهُم مُّكۡرَمُونَ ٤٢﴾

"For them there will be a known provision (in Paradise). Fruits; and they shall be honored." (As-Saaffaat 37:41-42)

They are *honor*ed by the favor that Allah will bestow on them; they are *honor*ed by provisions that come to them without toils from them or by asking as it is the situation with the life of this world; they are *honor*ed with great and abundant rewards that they will have from their Lord; and they are *honor*ed by the comfort, care, service and eternal delight they will have in Paradise.(1)

What a great gift and huge provision they are! Blessed be He Who says:

﴿هَٰذَا عَطَآؤُنَا فَٱمۡنُنۡ أَوۡ أَمۡسِكۡ بِغَيۡرِ حِسَابٖ ٣٩﴾

"This is Our gift: so spend you or withhold, no account will be asked (of you)." (Sad 38:39)

And says:

﴿إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَرِزۡقُنَا مَا لَهُۥ مِن نَّفَادٍ ٥٤﴾

"Verily, this is Our Provision which will never finish." (Sad 38:54)

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/23/52; *Zad Al-Maseer* 7/56; *Ruh al-Ma'ani* 23/86; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 4/23/56; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/10

Kinds of Fruits of Paradise

Fruits of Paradise are many. This is clearly indicated by the following statements of Allah:

﴿ مُتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا يَدۡعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَٰكِهَةٖ كَثِيرَةٖ وَشَرَابٖ ٥١ ﴾

"Therein they will recline; therein they will call for fruits in abundance and drinks." (Sad 38:51)

﴿ لَكُمۡ فِيهَا فَٰكِهَةٞ كَثِيرَةٞ ﴾

"Therein for you will be fruits in plenty, of which you will eat (as you desire)." (Az-Zukhruf 43:73)

The fruits are not only plenty; they are of different types. Allah says:

﴿ وَلَهُمۡ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ ٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ ﴾

"Therein for them is every kind of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord." (Muhammad 47:15)

This verse means that the dwellers of Paradise will have all kinds of fruits that have equivalents (only in names) in this world and those that have no equivalents.(1)

Some of the fruits of Paradise mentioned by names in the Qur'an, as vividly observed in the following verses:

﴿ فِيهِمَا فَٰكِهَةٞ وَنَخۡلٞ وَرُمَّانٞ ٦٨ ﴾

"In them (both) will be fruits, and date-palms and pomegranates." *(*Ar-Rahmaan *55:68)*

﴿ إِنَّ لِلۡمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا ٣١ حَدَآئِقَ وَأَعۡنَٰبٗا ٣٢ ﴾

"Verily, for the pious, there will be a success (Paradise): Gardens and grapevines." (An-Naba' 78:31,32)

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/26/50; and *Tayseer Al-Kareem* Ar-Rahmaan 7/71

Grapes are singled-out here because of their status and their multitude in these gardens.(1)

From the *Sunnah*, there are *Hadiths* that indicate that grapes are in Paradise. One of these is the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – who narrated: Once solar eclipse occurred during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. He offered the eclipse prayer. His Companions asked, "O Allah's Messenger! We saw you trying to take something while standing at your place and then we saw you retreating." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

"إِنِّي أُرِيتُ الْـجَنَّةَ فَتَنَاوَلْتُ مِنْهَا عُنْقُودًا وَلَوْ أَخَذْتُهُ لَأَكَلْتُمْ مِنْهُ مَا بَقِيَتِ الدُّنْيَا"

"I was shown Paradise and wanted to have a bunch of grapes from it. Had I taken it, you would have eaten from it as long as the world remains."

There is a *Hadith* that indicates the hugeness of the size of a bunch of grapes of Paradise. Imaam Ahmad recorded that 'Utbah ibn Abd As-Sulami said, "A Bedouin man came to the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and asked him about the *Hawd* (Water Cistern) and Paradise. The Bedouin asked, 'Does Paradise have fruits?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, '(Yes, and it also has a tree called *Toobaa*.) [(He) said something more but I could not recall it]. The Bedouin asked, 'Does it look like any of the trees that grow in our area?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, '(There is nothing resembling it among the trees in your land.)' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, then asked him, '(Have you travelled to Ash-Sham area)?' The Bedouin said: 'No.' The Prophet, blessings and peace of

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(1) See: *Tayseer Al-Kareem* Ar-Rahmaan 7/555

Allah be upon him, said, '(It looks like a tree that grows in Ash-Sham area and is called *Al-Jawzah*, which stands on one stem but its branches grow all around to the fullest extent.)' The Bedouin asked, 'How big is the cluster of its fruits?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, '(The distance that the crow flies in one month without rest.)' The Bedouin asked, 'How huge its trunk is?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, '(If a four-year old she-camel that your family owns travels it, it will not completely pass its trunk until its shoulders break from old age.)' The man asked, 'Does it bear grapes?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, answered in the affirmative. The Bedouin asked, 'How big are the grapes?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, '(Has your father ever slaughtered a ram)?' The Bedouin answered, 'Yes,' and the Prophet asked him, '(And then he skinned it and gave the skin to your mother and asked her to make a hanging bucket out of it)?' The Bedouin answered in the affirmative and added, 'The grape of this size would suffice for me and my family!' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, agreed and said, '(Yes, and also for the rest of your clan.)'"

Another fruit of Paradise that is mentioned in the Qur'an is the one produced by the lotus tree. Allah says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٥﴾ إِذْ يَغْشَى ٱلسِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾﴾

"And indeed he [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)) saw him [Jibreel (Gabriel)] at a second descent (i.e. another time). Near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass).Near it is the Paradise of Abode, when that covered the lote-tree which did cover it!" (An-Najm 53:13-16)

He also says:

﴿وَأَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْيَمِينِ مَآ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْيَمِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾ فِى سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ وَطَلْحٍ مَّنضُودٍ ﴿٢٩﴾﴾

"And those on the Right Hand - how (fortunate) will be those on the Right Hand? (They will be) among thornless lote-trees, and among Talh (banana-trees) with fruits piled one above another."

(Al-Waqi'ah 56:27-29)

The lotus is explained in the *Sunnah*. Muslim recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, (while narrating his night journey to *Baitul-Maqdis* and from there to Heaven):

"ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ بِي إِلَى سِدْرَةِ الْـمُنْتَهَى وَإِذَا وَرَقُهَا كَآذَانِ الْفِيلَةِ ، وَإِذَا ثَمَرُهَا كَالْقِلَالِ – قَالَ: – فَلَمَّا غَشِيَهَا مِنْ أَمْرِ اللهِ مَا غَشِيَ، تَغَيَّرَتْ فَمَا أَحَدٌ مِنْ خَلْقِ اللهِ يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يَنْعَتَهَا مِنْ حُسْنِهَا"

"Then I was taken to *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* whose leaves were like elephant ears and its fruit like big earthenware vessels. And when it was covered by the Command of Allah, it underwent such a change that none amongst the creation has the power to praise its beauty."

Lotus tree is well-known. It has much thorn and bears few fruits; the lotus of Paradise is however different. It bears plenty of fruits and has no thorns.

Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Sulaym bin 'Amir that he said: The Companions of the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, 'Sometimes, Allah would benefit us with the Bedouins and their questions (which they asked the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,).

One day, a Bedouin man came and said, 'Allah's Messenger, Allah mentioned that there would be a tree in Paradise and that tree is harmful; and I don't think there should be any harmful tree in Paradise.' The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

'Is Allah not saying, '*(Those on the Right Hand among the dwellers of Paradise will be) among thorn-less lote-trees*'? Allah has removed its thorns and replaced each thorn with a fruit; and each of its fruit will produce seventy-two uniquely different kinds of food.'"

Generally, there are many fruits of different kinds in Paradise; and there is no tree in this world, whether its fruit is sweet or bitter even colocynth, which is not in Paradise; the difference is that all trees of Paradise bear sweet fruits. This is according to Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father.(1)

Relationship between fruits of Paradise and those of this world

Some scholars are of the view that there is a relationship between fruits of Paradise and fruits of this world. They cite as their proof Allah's statement:

﴿كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى رُزِقْنَا مِن قَبْلُ﴾

"Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say: 'This is what we were provided with before.'" (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

The scholars who hold this view argue that the statement, 'That is what we were provided with before', is in reference to what they were provided with when they were in the world.(2)

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(1) See: *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 5/27/280; and *Ad-Durr al-manthur* 6/147

(2) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 1/385; *Tafseer Ibn Abu Hatim* 1/88; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 1/55; and *Zad Al-Maseer* 1/52

Other scholars reject this argument and hold that the statement, 'what we were provided with before' is not in reference to the fruits they were provided with in this world. They say it is in reference to the fruits of Paradise as a result of the strong resemblance between these fruits. This opinion is supported by the statement, 'And they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste)' from the same verse.

It is known that whenever a fruit of Paradise is plucked, another fruit will grow in its place. It is also known that not all fruits the dwellers of Paradise will be provided with in Paradise had been provided to them in the world. Many of the dwellers of Paradise did not have the opportunity to taste all the fruits of this world or even see them. Therefore, the statement in the verse, 'That is what we were provided with before', should be interpreted as fruits of Paradise.(1)

However, the most correct view is that there is no relationship between fruits of this world and those of the Hereafter but in names only. They are different in colour, shape and taste. Allah knows best.

The view is substantiated by the statement of 'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father: "There is nothing in Paradise that has equivalent in this world but in names only."(2)

The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, while describing the lotus tree:

"Then I was taken to *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* (lotus tree) whose leaves were like elephant ears and its fruit like big earthenware vessels. And when it was covered by the Command of Allah, it underwent such a change that none amongst the creation has the power to praise its beauty." (Recorded by Muslim)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p210

(2) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 1/391

He also describes the size of a bunch of grapes from Paradise with his statement:

"I was shown Paradise and wanted to have a bunch of grapes from it.

"وَلَوْ أَخَذْتُهُ لَأَكَلْتُمْ مِنْهُ مَا بَقِيَتِ الدُّنْيَا"

Had I taken it, you would have eaten from it as long as the world remains." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

Another proof supporting the fact that fruits of this world do not in any way look like the fruits of Paradise is that conditions of the Hereafter are different from conditions of this world. Eating and drinking in this world are for preservation of life and health; but in the Hereafter, they are not for preserving life and health, for the dwellers of Paradise are already meant to abide therein forever. Therefore, eating and drinking in Paradise are for pure enjoyment the reality of which we cannot yet be understood because it is of matters of the unseen.

We are obliged to believe in all that is mentioned in the Book of Allah and in the *Sunnah* of His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, and accept that the knowledge of their realities is with Allah alone.(1) In a *Qudsi Hadith*, the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, informed us that Allah, High and Exalted, said:

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(1) See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 1/233

"قَالَ اللهُ: أَعْدَدْتُ لِعِبَادِي الصَّالِحِينَ مَا لَا عَيْنٌ رَأَتْ وَلَا أُذُنٌ سَمِعَتْ ، وَلَا خَطَرَ عَلَى قَلْبِ بَشَرٍ"

"I have prepared for My righteous slaves (such excellent things) as no eye has ever seen, nor an ear has ever heard nor a human heart can ever think of." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah – may Allah be pleased with him)

* * *

Food of the Dwellers of Paradise

Among delights that Allah will grant His righteous servants in Paradise are food and drink; and He will address them thus:

﴿كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (٤٣)﴾

"Eat and drink comfortably for that which you used to do." (Al-Mursalat 77:43)

﴿كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔۢا بِمَآ أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَيَّامِ ٱلْخَالِيَةِ (٢٤)﴾

"Eat and drink at ease for that which you have sent on before you in days past!" (Al-Haaqqah 69:24)

The Lord of *Honor* and Majesty informs us that the delight will be everlasting interminable. He says:

﴿مَّثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَـٰرُ ۖ أُكُلُهَا دَآئِمٌ﴾

"The description of the Paradise which the pious have been promised, underneath it rivers flow, its provision is eternal and so is its shade." (Ar-Ra'd 13:35)

He also says:

﴿جَنَّـٰتِ عَدْنٍ مُّفَتَّحَةً لَّهُمُ ٱلْأَبْوَٰبُ (٥٠) مُتَّكِـِٔينَ فِيهَا يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَـٰكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَشَرَابٍ (٥١)﴾

"'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), whose doors will be open for them. Therein they will recline; therein they will call for fruits in abundance and drinks." (Sad 38:50-51)

It has been earlier mentioned that among the food of Paradise are fruits and of their drinks are honey, wine, milk and water. There are, however, verses that indicate other kinds of food beside fruits. One of such is meat. Allah says in *Surah At-Toor*:

﴿وَأَمْدَدْنَـٰهُم بِفَـٰكِهَةٍ وَلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ (٢٢)﴾

"And We shall provide them with fruit and meat, such as they desire." (At-Toor 52:22)

In this verse, Allah promises His righteous servants and those of their progeny who join them in righteousness that He would provide them with mean and fruits as they desire.(1)

In the noble verse, Allah mentioned the best types of food: fruits and meat, which are the choice of the affluent ones. Then, He did not mention any kind of fruit or meat. He only says, 'as they desire', for one of the dwellers of Paradise may desire a kind of meat or fruit that another dweller may not desire.(2)

In another verse, Allah mentions flesh of birds without mentioning a particular bird so that each dweller can have flesh of the kind of bird he desires. That is His statement:

﴿وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ (٢١)﴾

"And the flesh of birds that they desire." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:21)

Imaam Ahmad recorded in his *Musnad* on the authority of *Anas bin* Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ طَيْرَ الْـجَنَّةِ كَأَمْثَالِ الْبُخْتِ تَرْعَى فِي شَجَرِ الْـجَنَّةِ فَقَالَ أَبُوبَكْرٍ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ إِنَّ هَذِهِ لَطَيْرٌ نَاعِمَةٌ فَقَالَ: أَكَلَتُهَا أَنْعَمُ مِنْهَا، قَالَهَا ثَلَاثًا وَإِنِّي لَأَرْجُو أَنْ تَكُونَ مِمَّنْ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ".

"The birds of Paradise are like Khorasani camels in hugeness. They feed from the trees of Paradise." Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, said, 'Messenger of Allah, these are, indeed, comfortable birds.' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, then said, 'Their eaters are more comfortable.' He said so three times. He then added, 'And I wish you to be one of those who will eat of the flesh of these birds, Abu Bakr.'"

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 18/17/28; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 5/27/236; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/409

(2) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 28/352

At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about *Kawthar* and he answered:

"ذَاكَ نَهْرٌ أَعْطَانِيهِ اللهُ يَعْنِي فِي الْـجَنَّةِ أَشَدُّ بَيَاضًا مِنَ اللَّبَنِ وَأَحْلَى مِنَ الْعَسَلِ فِيهَا طَيْرٌ أَعْنَاقُهَا كَأَعْنَاقِ الْـجُزُرِ قَالَ عُمَرُ: إِنَّ هَذِهِ لَـنَاعِمَةٌ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ :أَكَلَتُهَا أَنْعَمُ مِنْهَا"

"That is the spring that my Lord will endow me with in Paradise. It is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. There are birds there whose necks are as long as camels'." Thereupon 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said, 'Indeed, they are comfortable birds!' The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, remarked, "Their eaters will be more comfortable."

There are other kinds of food mentioned in the *Sunnah*. Al-Bukhari and others recorded on the authority of Anas bin Malik that 'Abdullah bin *Salaam* asked the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, on his arrival at Madinah about the first meal the dwellers of Paradise will have when they enter it. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, answered him:

"أَوَّلُ طَعَامٍ يَأْكُلُهُ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ زِيَادَةُ كَبِ حُوتٍ"

"The first meal of the people of Paradise will be the edge of a whale's liver."

Muslim also recorded on the authority of Thawban, may Allah be pleased with him, the freed slave of Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, recounted that while he was standing beside Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, a Jewish rabbi came and said, "As-*Salaam*u 'alayka, Muhammad." Thawban pushed him and almost knocked him over. He said, "Why do you push me?" Thawban replied, "Why don't you say, 'Messenger of Allah'?" The Jew replied, "We only call him by the name his family named him." Allah's Messenger blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, "My name is Muhammad, the name by which my family named me." The Jew said, "I came to ask you [something]." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, said, "Would it benefit you if I told you?" He replied, "I will listen with my ears." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, drew a line with a stick he had and said, "Ask." The Jew asked, "Where will the people be on the Day the earth will be changed into another earth as will the heavens?" Allah's Messenger blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, replied, "They will be in darkness beside the Bridge."(1) He asked, "Who will be the first people to cross it?" He replied, "The poor emigrants." The Jew asked, "What will be their present when they enter Paradise?" He answered, "The edge of a whale's liver." He inquired, "What will they eat after that?" He responded, "A bull that grazed from the different sections of Paradise will be slaughtered for them." He asked, "What will they drink with it?" He answered, "From a spring there called *Salsabeel*." He said, "You spoke the truth," then he said, "I also came to ask you something that no one on earth knows except a prophet and one or two men." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, responded, "Would it benefit you if I spoke to you about it?" He said, "I will listen with my two ears. I came to ask you about the child." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, replied, "The fluid of a man is white, while the fluid of a woman is yellow. When they come together, if the fluid of the man predominates over the fluid of the woman, the two will form a male by the decree of Allah. And when the fluid of the woman predominates over the fluid of the man, the two will form a female by the decree of Allah." The Jew said, "You definitely spoke the truth, and you are surely a prophet," then he went away. Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, "When he asked me about what he asked, I had no knowledge on the matter until Allah bestowed it upon me."

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(1) It is a bridge that will be laid across Hell-fire; it is a frightening and scaring passageway. People will pass across it on their way to Paradise; some will pass across as quickly as a twinkle of an eye; some as a lightning; some as a wind; some as a bird; some as fast horses; some will pass across it walking fast and some will be dragged across it. People will pass across it according to their deeds until he will pass it, one whose light will be as little as the size of the thumb of his feet. There will also be those who will be seized and cast into Fire. Whoever passes the Siraat successfully will enter Paradise. (A.A. Imaam; *Pillars of Eemaan* p164)

The textual proof needed from the above *Hadith* is the fact that Allah, High and Exalted, will present as an entertainment to the poor ones among the emigrants, when they would enter Paradise, the edge of a whale's liver, and that their food thereafter would be bull that grazed from the different sections of Paradise and their drink would be from a spring called *Salsabeel.*

Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, said:

"تَكُونُ الْأَرْضُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ خُبْزَةً وَاحِدَةً يَتَكَفَّؤُهَا الْـجَبَّارُ بِيَدِهِ ، كَمَا يَكْفَأُ أَحَدُكُمْ خُبْزَتَهُ فِي السَّفَرِ ، نُزُلًا لِأَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ فَأَتَى رَجُلٌ مِنْ الْيَهُودِ فَقَالَ: بَارَكَ الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَبَا الْقَاسِمِ، أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ بِنُزُلِ أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ قَالَ: بَلَى قَالَ: تَكُونُ الْأَرْضُ خُبْزَةً وَاحِدَةً – كَمَا قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَنَظَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَيْنَا ثُمَّ ضَحِكَ حَتَّى بَدَتْ نَوَاجِذُهُ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ بِإِدَامِهِمْ قَالَ: إِدَامُهُمْ بَالَامٌ وَنُونٌ قَالُوا: وَمَا هَذَا ؟قَالَ: ثَوْرٌ وَنُونٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْ زَائِدَةِ كَبِدِهِمَا سَبْعُونَ أَلْفًا"

"The (planet of) earth will be a bread on the Day of Resurrection, and Allah will topple turn it with His Hand like anyone of you topple turns a bread with his hands while (preparing the bread) for a journey, and that bread will be the entertainment for the people of Paradise." A man from the Jews came (to the Prophet) and said, " May the Beneficent (Allah) bless you, O Abul Qasim! Shall I tell you of the entertainment of the people of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection?" The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said, " Yes." The Jew said, ' The earth will be a bread,' as the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, had said. Thereupon the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, looked at us and smiled till his premolar tooth became visible. Then the Jew further said, "Shall I tell you of the udm (additional food taken with bread) they will have with the bread?" He added, "That will be *Balam* and *Nun*." The people asked, "What is that?" He said, "It is an ox and a fish, and seventy thousand people will eat of the edge of a whale's liver."

In Paradise, food does not dissolve and produce impure residues such as excreta, urine and wind unlike foods of this world. Rather, Paradise is an abode of cleanliness and purity and its dwellers are clean and purified people. All that is in Paradise is delight; even the residue produced by their food is all delight, purity and pleasant.(1)

Muslim recorded on the authority of Jabir bin 'Abdullah – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – who narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say:

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(1) See: *Al-Yawm Al-Akhirah Al-Jannah wan-Naar,* by Al-Ashqar p232

"إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ يَأْكُلُونَ فِيهَا وَيَشْرَبُونَ ، وَلَا يَتْفُلُونَ وَلَا يَبُولُونَ ، وَلَا يَتَغَوَّطُونَ وَلاَ يَمْتَخِطُونَ ". قَالُوا: فَمَا بَالُ الطَّعَامِ؟ قَالَ: " جُشَاءٌ وَرَشْحٌ كَرَشْحِ الْمِسْكِ، يُلْهَمُونَ التَّسْبِيحَ وَالتَّحْمِيدَ كَمَا يُلْهَمُونَ النَّفَسَ ".

"The inmates of Paradise would eat and drink but would neither spit, nor pass water, nor void excrement, nor suffer catarrh. It was said: Then, what would happen with food? Thereupon he said: "They would belch and sweat (and it would be over with their food), and their sweat would be that of musk and they would glorify and praise Allah as easily as you breathe."

Imaam Ahmad recorded on the authority of Zayd bin Arqam, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated: A man from among the Jews came to the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and said, 'Abul-Qasim, are you not claiming that the dwellers of Paradise would eat therein and drink?' (The man then turned to his Companions and said to them, 'if he confirms this, then I have defeated him.') The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"بَلَى وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ! إِنَّ أَحَدَهُمْ لَيُعْطَى قُوَّةَ مِائَةِ رَجُلٍ فِي الْـمَطْعَمِ وَالْـمَشْرَبِ وَالشَّهْوَةِ وَالْجِمَاعِ، قَالَ: فَقَالَ لَهُ الْيَهُودِيُّ: فَإِنَّ الَّذِي يَأْكُلُ وَيَشْرَبُ تَكُونُ لَهُ الْـحَاجَةُ قَالَ: فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: حَاجَةُ أَحَدِهِمْ عَرَقٌ يَفِيضُ مِنْ جُلُودِهِمْ مِثْلَ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ، فَإِذَا الْبَطْنُ قَدْ ضَمُرَ"

"Yes, by Him in Whose Hand is my soul! One of them (dwellers of Paradise) would be given the strength of hundred men in eating, drinking and marital intercourse." The Jewish man said, 'Then the one who eats and drinks would need to relieve nature.' Thereupon the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: "They would relieve nature through a sweat that would come out of their skins like the fragrance of musk."

The above *Hadiths* indicate that residues that result from the dwellers of Paradise's eating and drinking would also be pure and pleasant. This is implicitly mentioned in the Qur'an in the following verse:

﴿وَسَقَىٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا ﴿٢١﴾﴾

"And their Lord will give them a pure drink." (Al-Insaan 76:21)

One may wonder: How would it be possible to roast meat in Paradise when there is no fire there?

Ibn Al-Qayyim provided answer for this poser. He said:

"Some scholars suggested that the meat would become roasted through the divine command, 'Be'. Others suggested that the meat would be roasted outside Paradise and then brought inside for the consumption of the dwellers. However, the correct answer is that the meat of Paradise would be roasted and readied for consumption through means that would be decreed by the Almighty, All-Wise Lord. He is the only One Capable of determining the means of making fruits ripe enough and other food well-prepared enough for consumption. Having said this, it should not be necessarily assumed that there would not be an absolutely beneficial and completely harmless fire in Paradise, specially created for this purpose.

"It has been authentically reported that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said that the incense of the dwellers of Paradise would of aloes-wood. And the aroma of that incense can only be obtained without burning the wood.

In essence, food, sweet and frankincense necessitate means of producing them. Allah is the Creator of the cause and the effect; He is the Lord and Owner of all things; and there is none worthy of being worshipped but Him. He creates in them means of turning food to belch and sweat that come out of their skins.

He creates in their bowels warmness that processes the food and turns it to sweat and belch. He creates for the fruit suitable warmness that ripens it for consumption; and provides for the tree its own leaves as shade. The Lord of the world and the Hereafter is One. He is the Creator of the causes and the rule. All that He creates in this world and the Hereafter as well as the causes are a manifestation of His deeds and wisdom. That is why man is sometimes astonished when He observes some of Allah's acts happening through causes he is not familiar with. Such unfamiliarity may sometimes lead man to denial and disbelief; and that is pure ignorance and injustice on his part. For, Allah is not incapable of creating causes and effects that are beyond the world we witness now.

Perhaps, the first form of creation that He created and that we can feel with all our senses is more wonderful than the next creation (in the Hereafter) that He has promised. Perhaps, bringing forth these fruits out of coarse earth, water, wood and suitable air should astound the human intelligence more than its bringing forth out of the soil, water and air of Paradise. Perhaps, bringing out these drinks that serve as nourishment, medicine and enjoyment out of what is between excretion and blood or out of the vomit of insects should be more amazing. Perhaps, bringing out pure gold and silver out of the rocks should be deemed more incredible than producing them in Paradise. Perhaps, bringing out silk out of the saliva of silkworm, and the manner the silkworms build on themselves white, red and yellow domes are more baffling than bringing the silk out of tree calyxes. Perhaps, flowing of seas of water between the heaven and the earth through clouds should be more startling than flowing of water in Paradise without a ridge.

In general, reflect over Allah's signs which He invited His servants to reflect upon and that are signs indicating His perfect ability, will, wisdom and sovereignty and compare them to what He informs us about of the matter of the Hereafter, Paradise and Hell; you will realize that those signs are of the clearest testimonies that the Hereafter and all the related matters are true. You will also realize that the signs and information about the Hereafter emanate from the same source, the same Lord, the same Creator, the same Owner. May those who reject faith after all these proofs be kept far away from Allah's mercy!"(1)

Sometimes, an indirect mention of food and drink is made in the Qur'an as in the following statement of Allah:

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ
الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾﴾

"Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them; (there will be) therein all that inner-selves could desire, all that eyes could delight in and you will abide therein forever." (Az-Zukhruf 43:71)

For, if there is no food in the trays and no drink in the cups, then there is no meaning in passing them round the dwellers of Paradise.(2)

I ask Allah to accept our repentance and include us and our Muslim brethren among His righteous servants whom He will *honor* with the Blissful Paradise.

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p230-232

(2) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 27/225; and *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 8/16/111

Drinks of the Dwellers of Paradise

There are verses in the Qur'an in which Allah promises His righteous servants that He would endow them with kinds of drinks. Four of these drinks are explicitly mentioned. They are water, milk, honey and wine. All these kinds of drinks are explicitly mentioned in the following verse:

﴿مَثَلُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى وُعِدَ ٱلْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَآ أَنْهَٰرٌ مِّن مَّآءٍ غَيْرِ ءَاسِنٍ﴾

"The description of Paradise which the pious have been promised (is that) in it are rivers of water the taste and smell of which are not changed." (Muhammad 47:15)

There are also verses in which drinks are generally mentioned without any specification. Some of these verses are as follows:

﴿يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِكَأْسٍ مِّن مَّعِينٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ بَيْضَآءَ لَذَّةٍ لِّلشَّٰرِبِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنزَفُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾﴾

"Round them will be passed a cup of pure wine - white, delicious to the drinkers. Neither will they have Ghoul (any kind of hurt, abdominal pain, headache, a sin) from that, nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom." (As-Saaffaat 37:45-47)

﴿إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا ﴿٣١﴾ حَدَآئِقَ وَأَعْنَٰبًا ﴿٣٢﴾ وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٣﴾ وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا ﴿٣٤﴾﴾

"Verily, for the pious, there will be a success (Paradise); Gardens and vineyards, and young full-breasted (mature) maidens of equal age, and a full cup (of wine)." (An-Naba' 78:31-34)

The word 'cups' in the above verses is in reference to cups of wine[1] However, the wine of Paradise does not resemble the wine of this world, which has been described in the worst of

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[1] See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 312/23/53

descriptions. The wine of this world makes the drinker lose his senses and money. It destroys his body through many diseases that it causes; it leads to enmity and rancour; encourages murder, adultery and sodomy; removes sense of *honor*, and brings ignominy and disgrace.[1] The wine of Paradise is devoid of all these negative characteristics. Rather, the wine of Paradise is as described by the All-Mighty:

﴿يَتَنَٰزَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا لَّا لَغْوٌ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأْثِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

"There they shall pass from hand to hand a (wine) cup, free from any Laghw (dirty, false, evil vain talk between them), and free from sin (because it will be lawful for them to drink)." (At-Toor 52:23)

Sometimes, the wine of Paradise is mixed with *Kaafoor* (a sweet smelling spring in Paradise); sometimes it is mixed with ginger; and sometime it is a mixture of *Tasneem*, which is the highest drink in Paradise and the most favored drink of its inhabitants. Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِن كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ﴿٥﴾﴾

"Verily, the pious and righteous shall drink a cup (of wine) mixed with (water from a spring in Paradise called) Kaafoor." (Al-Insaan 76:5)

﴿وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنجَبِيلًا ﴿١٧﴾﴾

"And they will be given to drink there a cup (of wine) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger)." (Al-Insaan 76:17)

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[1] See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p318

﴿ وَمِزَاجُهُۥ مِن تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

"It (that wine) will be mixed with Tasneem." (Al-Mutaffifin 83:27)

Some may ask: Why would the dwellers of Paradise eat and drink while they would be living there forever. The answer to this question has been provided by Al-Qurtubi with the following statement:

"The delight, eating, drinking and clothing of the dwellers of Paradise are not in order to drive away any pain. Their eating is not to drive away hunger, their drinking is not to quench any thirst and their using of perfume is not to drive away any bad odour. They are rather enjoyments over enjoyments and bliss upon bliss. Can't you reflect on Allah's statement, '

﴿ إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَىٰ ﴿١١٨﴾ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تَضْحَىٰ ﴿١١٩﴾ ﴾

Verily, you have (a promise from Us) that you will never be hungry therein nor naked. And you (will) suffer not from thirst therein nor from the sun's heat.' (Ta Ha 20:118,119)

The wisdom behind this is that Allah gives them of the kind of the bliss which they used to have in the world; and then provided them an increase upon that the extent of which is known only to Him."(1)

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(1) *At-Tadhkirah* by Al-Qurtubi 2/569

Provision in Paradise

Difference between it and Provision in this World

The provision of Paradise is what Allah has prepared for His righteous servants of food, drink and all that could make their life in Paradise blissful and delightful.

There are verses in the Qur'an that mention the provision of Paradise. Some of these verses will be mentioned and discussed shortly.

Allah says in *Surah* Sad:

﴿ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَرِزْقُنَا مَا لَهُۥ مِن نَّفَادٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ ﴾

"(It will be said to them)! Verily, this is Our Provision which will never finish." (Sad 38:54)

In these verses, Allah attributed the provision to Himself. He informs us that what He gives His righteous servants in Garden of Delight of fruits, drinks, women who restrain their gazes and all other great enjoyments are only provision from Him alone.(1) He also informs us that this provision will never finish. If the dwellers of Paradise were to pluck one fruit from one of the trees of Paradise and eat it, another fruit will immediately grow in place of the plucked one. The situation will be like this forever.(2)

The provision is continuous, everlasting and at all times without limit.(3) Allah says:

﴿ فَأُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾ ﴾

" Such will enter Paradise, where they will be provided therein (with all things in abundance) without limit." (Ghafir 40:40)

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/23/175

(2) See: *Ibid.*; *Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 8/15/220; and *Adwa Al-Bayan* 7/37

(3) See: *Tayseer Al-Kareem* Ar-Rahmaan 9/432

Also, reference is made to the provision of Paradise in the following verses:

﴿ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ ۖ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا۟ مِنْهَا مِن ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوا۟ هَٰذَا ٱلَّذِى رُزِقْنَا مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَأُتُوا۟ بِهِۦ مُتَشَٰبِهًا ۖ ﴿٢٥﴾ ﴾

"And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). Every time they will be provided with a fruit therefrom, they will say: "This is what we were provided with before,' and they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste)." (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

﴿ وَنَادَىٰٓ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ أَنْ أَفِيضُوا۟ عَلَيْنَا مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ أَوْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۚ قَالُوٓا۟ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَرَّمَهُمَا عَلَى ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾ ﴾

"And the dwellers of the Fire will call to the dwellers of Paradise: "Pour on us some water or anything that Allah has provided you with." They will say:" Both (water and provision) Allah has forbidden to the disbelievers." (Al-A'raaf 7:50)

In this verse, Allah informs us that on the Day of Resurrection, the dwellers of Hell – after having being hit with great calamity and severe hunger and thirst for their disobedience to Allah when they were in this world – would seek relief from the dwellers of Paradise and ask them to give them some of the provisions that Allah has endowed them with. But the dwellers of Paradise would reply that such provisions are forbidden to the disbelievers.(1)

In *Surah* Maryam, Allah says:

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(1) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 12/472; *Al-Kash-shaaf* 2/82; and *Al-Muharrir Al-Wajiz* 7/71

﴿ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَٰمًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ رِزْقُهُمْ فِيهَا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ﴿٦٢﴾ ﴾

"They shall not hear therein (in Paradise) any Laghw (dirty, false, evil vain talk), but only Salaam (salutations of peace). And they will have therein their sustenance, morning and afternoon." (Maryam 19:62)

In this verse, Allah informs us about the meal time of the dwellers of Paradise: morning and afternoon; for there will not be any day or night in Paradise as it is known in this world. The dwellers of Paradise will live in perpetual light. They will never sleep.(1)

Jabir bin 'Abdullah – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"النَّوْمُ أَخُو الْمَوْتِ وَلَا يَنَامُ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ"

"Sleep is the brother of death. So, the dwellers of Paradise will never sleep."(2)

Some people might wonder about lack of day and night and lack of sleep in Paradise. There should not be any surprise in that because conditions of the Hereafter are different from those of this world in all aspects; and it is impossible for human intellect to comprehend those conditions.

Other verses in which a mention is made of the provision of Paradise are:

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَهَاجَرُوا۟ وَجَٰهَدُوا۟ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَاوَوا۟ وَّنَصَرُوٓا۟ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَّهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾ ﴾

"And those who believed, and emigrated and strove hard in the Cause of Allah (Al-Jihaad), as well as those who gave

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 9/16/102

(2) See: *Sifah Al-Jannah*, by *Abu Nu'aym*; and it is classified as authentic by Al-Albani in *As-Silsilah As-Sahihah* 3/73

(them) asylum and aid - these are the believers in truth, for them is forgiveness and Rizqun Kareem (a generous provision i.e. Paradise)." (Al-Anfaal 8:74)

﴿وَٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَٱلطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَٰتِۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَۖ لَهُم
مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

"Good statements are for good people (or good women for good men) and good people for good statements (or good men for good women); such (good people) are innocent of (every) bad statement which they say; for them is Forgiveness, and Rizqun Kareem (generous provision i.e. Paradise)." (An-Noor 24:26)

﴿لِّيَجْزِيَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ
كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾﴾

"That He may recompense those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds. Those, theirs is forgiveness and Rizqun Kareem (generous provision, i.e. Paradise)." (Saba' 34:4)

In the above verses, Allah describes the provision of Paradise as generous.

Allah also says in *Surah* Al-Hajj:

﴿وَٱلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ قُتِلُوٓاْ أَوْ مَاتُواْ لَيَرْزُقَنَّهُمُ ٱللَّهُ
رِزْقًا حَسَنًاۚ وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَهُوَ خَيْرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾﴾

"Those who emigrated in the Cause of Allah and after that were killed or died, surely, Allah will provide a good provision for them. And verily, it is Allah Who indeed is the Best of those who make provision." (Al-Hajj 22:58)

And in *Surah At-Talaaq*, He says:

﴿وَمَن يُؤْمِنۢ بِٱللَّهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَٰلِحًا يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ
فِيهَآ أَبَدًاۖ قَدْ أَحْسَنَ ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ رِزْقًا ﴿١١﴾﴾

"And whosoever believes in Allah and performs righteous good deeds, He will admit him into Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. Allah has indeed granted for him an excellent provision." (At-Talaaq 65:11)

Differences between the provision of Paradise and the provision of this world:

The provision of Paradise is great, generous and excellent. There are many ways that make it different from that of this world. Rather, there is no slightest relationship between both neither in enjoyment nor in taste or in pleasantness, quality, appearance or odour. The only thing they share in common is name. Among the most glaring differences between them are as follows:

1. Provision of this world ends in any season of the year either by temporarily or permanently be unavailable. As for the provision of Paradise, it is perpetually available all the time. In Paradise, there is no winter or summer fruit. It is only permanent and unending enjoyment.

2. In the provision of this world, some is good and some is rotten. As for the provision of Paradise; it is entirely and absolutely good. Nothing thereof is rotten or bad. Every part of it is of excellent quality in odour, taste, enjoyment and appearance.

3. Provision of this world is only attained through search and toil. As for the provision of Paradise; it is obtained without any toil or difficulty. Rather, it spontaneously comes to the dwellers of Paradise

as a manifestation of their Lord's *honor* and favor for them.

4. Provision of this world needs to be reached while that of Paradise is opposite. It is brought within the dwellers' reach. Allah says:

﴿وَذُلِّلَتۡ قُطُوفُهَا تَذۡلِيلٗا ١٤﴾

"And the bunches of fruit thereof will hang low within their reach." (Al-Insaan 76:14)

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Chapter Five

Situation of the Dwellers of Paradise

Meaning of '*Al-Husna*', 'the More' and the Opinions of the Scholars Concerning Glancing at Allah's Countenance

As for '*Al-Husna*' and 'the More', a mention is made of these two words in *Surah Yunus*. Allah says:

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحۡسَنُواْ ٱلۡحُسۡنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٞۖ وَلَا يَرۡهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمۡ قَتَرٞ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌۚ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ
ٱلۡجَنَّةِۖ هُمۡ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ٢٦﴾

"For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah (glorified and exalted be He). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, they will abide therein forever." (Yunus 10:26)

Majority of the scholars including eminent Companions such as Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, are of the opinion that *Al-Husna* in the verse means Paradise while the word 'more' means glancing at Allah's noble Countenance. There are many proofs substantiating this from the Companions and their successors.(1)

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(1) See: *Al-Asma was-Sifaat*, by Al-Bayhaqi 2/32

Glancing at Allah's Countenance is the highest degree of divine *honor* that cannot be attained by even the pious and righteous ones except in the Abode of Eternity alone.(1)

Imaam Tabari is of the view that 'the more' means whatever the dwellers of Paradise are given in addition to their being admitted to Paradise; and this includes chambers, palaces, divine pleasure and forgiveness, and glancing at Allah's Countenance. Since Allah has not specified a particular thing, then it should be applied to all the above.(2)

Ahmad, Muslim, An-Nasai and others recorded on the authority of Suhayb ibn Sinan Ar-Rumi, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, recited this verse,

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُواْ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ﴾

'For those who have done good is *Al-Husna* and even more' and then said,

"إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ الْـجَنَّةَ وَأَهْلُ النَّارِ النَّارَ، نَادَى مُنَادٍ : يَا أَهْلَ الْـجَنَّةِ، إِنَّ
لَكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ مَوْعِدًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُنْجِزَكُمُوهُ ،قَالُوا: أَلَمْ يُبَيِّضْ وُجُوهَنَا وَيُثَقِّلْ
مَوَازِينَنَا وَيُدْخِلْنَا الْـجَنَّةَ،وَيُجِرْنَا مِنَ النَّارِ قَالَ: فَيُكْشَفُ الْحِجَابُ فَيَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْهِ
،فَوَاللهِ مَا أَعْطَاهُمُ اللهُ شَيْئًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَيْهِ، وَلَا أَقَرَّ لِأَعْيُنِهِمْ"

'When those deserving of Paradise would enter Paradise and those deserving of Hell would enter Hell, an announcer would announce, 'O you people of Paradise, indeed, your Lord wants to fulfil His promise to you.' They would say, 'Has He not made the scales of our good deeds heavy, brightened our faces, made us enter Paradise and saved us from Hell?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, proceeded, 'Then Allah will lift the veil, and of things given to them nothing would he dearer to them than the sight of their Lord, the Mighty and the Glorious." (This is An-Nasai's version)

In this *Hadith*, the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, informs us that in spite of perfect bliss the dwellers of Paradise would be enjoying there, nothing would be dearer to them of all that Allah would give them more than their glancing at His noble Face. This is because; the enjoyment they would have from that would be their greatest. For, the more a person loves something, the greater his enjoyment whenever he attains it; and the pleasure of looking at the noble Countenance of Allah is the greatest delight.(1)

The logical proof substantiating the opinion that '*Al-Husna*' means Paradise and 'the more' means glancing at Allah's noble Countenance is that '*Husna*' is a singular word prefixed with the definite article 'Al' (which means 'the') thereby indicating that it is in reference to something that has already been mentioned before (i.e. Abode of Peace) mentioned in a verse preceding the one in which '*Al-Husna*' is mentioned. The verse is:

﴿وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ دَارِ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ﴾

"Allah calls to the home of peace (i.e. Paradise)." (Yunus 10:25)

Since all the Muslims know that the abode of peace is Paradise, then 'more' should be something different from all that is in Paradise and its delight; if not, this would amount to repetition. Hence, the conclusion that 'more' means glancing at Allah's noble Face, as made clear in the *Hadith* narrated by Suhayb – may Allah be pleased with him.(2)

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(1) See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 11/350
(2) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 15/71

(1) See: *Majmu' Fatawa Ibn Taymiyyah* 1/26,27
(2) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 17/77

It is Established that the Believers will Glance at Allah's Noble Countenance in Paradise

Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah unanimously agree that it is only in the Hereafter that Allah will be seen. This is an established and correct belief. Here is what Ibn Al-Qayyim has to say about seeing Allah:

"This is the noblest, the most significant and the most crucial chapter of the book. It is the greatest relief for *Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* and the greatest discomfort for people of innovation and misguidance. It is the ultimate goal to which ardent workers buckle down and which competitors vie for. In fact, it is a matter for which the righteous ones aim at. When the dwellers of Paradise attain it, they forget whatever delight they are in; and screening the dwellers of Hell from knowing it is harsher on them than the torment of Hell. It is the ultimate goal, seeking of which is agreed upon by the Prophets, the Messengers, the Companions and their followers, and all the leaders of the Muslims throughout ages."(1)

Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah have clear verses and authentic *Hadiths* to support their view that dwellers of Paradise will see their Lord. I am going to mention some of these proofs along with statements of scholars from among the Prophet's Companions, their successors and the righteous predecessors – may Allah have mercy upon them all. Then, I will mention the proofs cited by those who dispute that the believers will see their Lord, and analyse the same.

Proofs supporting that the dwellers of Paradise will see their Lord:

From the Qur'an:

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(1) *Hadi Al-Arwah* p326

﴿ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

One: *"Some faces that Day shall be Nâdirah (shining and radiant), looking at their Lord (Allah)."* (Al-Qiyamah 75:22 , 23)

The verse shows that there are faces, on the Day of Resurrection, which will be blessed with glancing at Allah, Lord of *honor* and Majesty.

﴿ وَٱللَّهُ يَدْعُوٓا۟ إِلَىٰ دَارِ ٱلسَّلَٰمِ وَيَهْدِى مَن يَشَآءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَٰطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ ۞ لِّلَّذِينَ
أَحْسَنُوا۟ ٱلْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ۖ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ ۚ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ ﴾

Two: *"Allah calls to the home of peace (i.e. Paradise, by accepting Allah's religion of Islamic Monotheism and by doing righteous good deeds and abstaining from polytheism and evil deeds) and guides whom He wills to the Straight Path. For those who have done good is the best (reward, i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Countenance of Allah (glorified and exalted be He). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, they will abide therein forever."*

(Yunus 10:25 , 26)

In this verse, Allah informs us that those who sincerely worship Allah alone in this world, perform what He made obligatory upon them and abstain from all that He forbid will be admitted to Paradise.(1) In addition to that, they will be blessed with glancing at the noble Countenance of Allah. This is the interpretation that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, himself gave for the verse; it is also the interpretation given by his noble Companions – may Allah be pleased with them – and their successors and all the eminent jurists and scholars who came after them.(1)

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(1) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 15:62

﴿وَلَمَّا جَآءَ مُوسَىٰ لِمِيقَٰتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُۥ رَبُّهُۥ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِىٓ أَنظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ۚ قَالَ لَن
تَرَىٰنِى وَلَٰكِنِ ٱنظُرْ إِلَى ٱلْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ ٱسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُۥ فَسَوْفَ تَرَىٰنِى ۚ فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ
رَبُّهُۥ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُۥ دَكًّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا ۚ فَلَمَّآ أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَٰنَكَ
تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾﴾

Three: *"And when Moosaa (Moses) came at the time and place appointed by Us, and his Lord spoke to him; he said: ' O my Lord! Show me (Yourself), that I may look upon You.' Allah said: 'You cannot see Me, but look upon the mountain; if it stands still in its place then you shall see Me.' " So when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He made it collapse to dust, and Moosaa (Moses) fell down unconscious. Then when he recovered his senses he said: "Glory be to You, I turn to You in repentance and I am the first of the believers.' "* (Al-A'raaf 7:143)

The following points could be deduced from this verse:

1. It is unbecoming of any Muslim to believe that Prophet Moses, peace be upon him – would ask Allah of something that is impossible.(2)

2. If seeing Allah was impossible, the Lord of *honor* and Majesty would have rebuked Prophet Moosaa (peace be upon him) for requesting it. There are substantive proofs for this in the Qur'an. When Prophet Ibraheem, peace be upon him – asked his Lord to show him how He resurrects the dead He did not rebuke him for that. When Isa (peace be upon him) asked His Lord to send a table of food from the heaven, He did not reprimand him for such a request. But when Prophet Nuh (Noah), peace be upon him – asked Allah for the rescue of his son, Allah reprimanded him for that request telling him:

﴿إِنَّهُۥ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَٰلِحٍ ۖ فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۖ إِنِّىٓ أَعِظُكَ أَن تَكُونَ مِنَ
ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾﴾

"Verily, his work is unrighteous, so ask not of Me that of which you have no knowledge! I admonish you, lest you be one of the ignorant." (Hud 11:46)

3. When Prophet Moosaa, peace be upon him – asked Allah's permission to see Him, Allah only told him,

﴿لَن تَرَىٰنِى﴾

"You cannot see Me."

He did not say, "It is impossible to see Me". And the difference between the two answers is clear for whoever ponders over it. The answer indicates that Allah could be seen; it is only that Moosaa's eyes were not strong enough to withstand glancing at Him in this world.

4. Allah informed Moosaa, peace be upon him – that the mountain, with its solidity, could not withstand Allah's appearance. How then could a weak human withstand Him? Allah says:

﴿ٱنظُرْ إِلَى ٱلْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ ٱسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُۥ فَسَوْفَ تَرَىٰنِى﴾

"Look upon the mountain; if it stands still in its place then you shall see Me." (Al-A'raaf 7:143)

5. Allah is Capable of making the mountain stay still in its place; that is why He conditioned Moosaa's ability to see Him on that. If seeing Him, in itself, was impossible, He would not have conditioned it on the mountain's staying still.

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(1) See: *Sharh Usool I'tiqad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* by Al-Lalaka'i 3/470; and *Hadi Al-Arwah* p329

(2) See: *Al-Ibanah fi Usool Ad-Diyanah* p14; and *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawyyah* p206

6. Among the clearest proofs on seeing Allah is His noble statement:

﴿فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُۥ لِلۡجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُۥ دَكّٗا﴾

"So when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He made it collapse to dust." (Al-A'raf 7:143)

Therefore, if it was possible for Him to appear to the mountain that is a mere nonliving creature and that can have no reward or punishment, then why is it impossible for Him to appear to His Prophets, Messengers and righteous servants in His abode of *honor*. Therefore, the lesson Allah wanted Prophet Moosaa to learn concerning his request to see Him is that if a mountain, in its solidity and might, could not stand still when Allah appeared to it then no human would be able to withstand glancing at Him in this world with a greater reason due to his weakness. Allah knows best.

7. Allah addressed and called Moosaa, peace be upon him. So if it is possible to be addressed by someone, then it should be possible to see him as well.(1)

﴿كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمۡ عَن رَّبِّهِمۡ يَوۡمَئِذٖ لَّمَحۡجُوبُونَ ١٥﴾

Four: *"Nay! Surely, they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day."* (Al-Mutafiffin 83:15)

The message of the verse is that Allah would give the disbelievers the greatest of all punishments: they would be screened from seeing Him. If the believers are not to see their Lord then they also would veiled. Imaam Ash-Shafi'i has cited this verse to substantiate the fact that the believers would glance at their Lord in the Hereafter.(2)

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(1) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p327-328)

(2) See: *Sharh I'tiqad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* 3/468; *al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 12/19/261; *Hadi Al-Arwah* p332; and *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* p206

Proofs from the *Sunnah*

One: Jarir bin 'Abdullah Al-Bajali, may Allah be pleased with him,narrated: "We were sitting with the Prophet and he looked at the moon on the night of the full-moon and said,

”إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا ، لَا تُضَامُّونَ فِي رُؤْيَتِهِ، فَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ لَا تُغْلَبُوا عَنْ صَلَاةٍ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا فَافْعَلُوا، ثُمَّ قَرَأَ﴿وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ﴾ “

"You people will see your Lord as you see this full moon, and you will have no trouble in seeing Him, so if you can avoid missing (through sleep or business, etc.) a prayer before sunrise *(Fajr)* and a prayer before sunset *(Asr)* you must do so.' He then recited Allah's statement: *and glorify the Praises of your Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting (i.e. the Fajr, Zuhr, and 'Asr prayers).' (Recorded by al-Bukhari and Muslim)*

Two: Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him,narrated that some people during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said: 'Messenger of Allah! Shall we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?' The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

Yes, "نَعَمْ" and added:

”هَلْ تُضَارُّونَ فِي رُؤْيَةِ الشَّمسِ بِالظَّهِيرَةِ صَحْوًا لَيْسَ مَعَهَا سَحَابٌ؟ وَهَلْ تُضَارُّونَ فِي رؤيَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ صَحْوًا لَيْسَ فِيهَا سَحَابٌ“

'Do you feel any trouble in seeing the sun at noon with no cloud over it, and do you feel trouble in seeing the moon (open) in the full moonlit night with no cloud over it?'

They said: 'No, Messenger of Allah!' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, then said:

”مَا تُضَارُّونَ فِي رُؤْيَةِ اللهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِلَّا كَمَا تُضَارُّونَ فِي رُؤْيَة أَحَدِهِمَا“

"You will not feel any trouble in seeing Allah on the Day of Resurrection any more than you do in seeing any one of them." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

In the above two *Hadiths*, the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, used what people practically see in this world such as sun and moon to illustrate how the believers will see Allah on the Day of Resurrection.(1)

Three: Suhayb bin Sinan Ar-Rumi, may Allah be pleased with him,narrated: "The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, recited this verse, 'For those who have done good is *Al-Husna* and even more' and then said,

”إِذَا دَخَلَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الْجَنَّةَ – قَالَ: – يَقُولُ اللهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: تُرِيدُونَ شَيْئًا أَزِيدُكُمْ؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: أَلَمْ تُبَيِّضْ وُجُوهَنَا؟ أَلَمْ تُدْخِلْنَا الْجَنَّةَ وَتُنَجِّنَا مِنَ النَّارِ ؟– قَالَ: – فَيَكْشِفُ الْحِجَابَ، فَمَا أُعْطُوا شَيْئًا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ“.

'When those deserving of Paradise would enter Paradise and those deserving of Hell would enter Hell, an announcer would announce, 'O you people of Paradise, indeed, your Lord wants to fulfil His promise to you.' They would say, 'Has He not made the scales of our good deeds heavy, brightened our faces, made us enter Paradise and saved us from Hell?' The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, proceeded, 'Then Allah will lift the veil, and of things given to them nothing would be dearer to them than the sight of their Lord, the Mighty and the Glorious." (Recorded by Muslim)

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(1) See: *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* p211

Lifting of the veil means removing all screens standing between the dwellers of Paradise and seeing their Lord. They would then glance at Him in His splendour, Majesty, perfection, highness and beauty. There is none worthy of being worshipped but Him.(1)

Four: Abu Moosaa Al-Ash'ari, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”جَنَّتَانِ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا، وَجَنَّتَانِ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ آنِيَتُهُمَا وَمَا فِيهِمَا، وَمَا بَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ وَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا رِدَاءُ الْكِبْرِيَاءِ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ فِي جَنَّةِ عَدْنٍ “

"There would be two gardens (in Paradise) the vessels and contents of which would be of silver, and two gardens whose vessels and contents would be of gold. The only thing intervening to hinder the people from looking at their Lord will be the mantle of Grandeur over His face in the Garden of Eden."

What is meant by mantle of Grandeur in this *Hadith* is Allah's pride and Majesty as explained in another *Hadith* recorded by Abu Dawood on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”قَالَ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: الْكِبْرِيَاءُ رِدَائِي وَالْعَظَمَةُ إِزَارِي، فَمَنْ نَازَعَنِي وَاحِدًا مِنْهُمَا قَذَفْتُهُ فِي النَّارِ“.

"Allah said, 'Pride is My cloak and Majesty is My lower garment, and I shall throw him who view with Me regarding one of them into Hell.'"

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(1) See: *At-Tadhkirah li Ahwal Al-Mawta wa Umuri Al-Akhirah* 2/590

Ibn Taymiyyah, while commenting on these *Hadiths*, said: "The authenticity of these and other *Hadiths* of the same meaning are agreed upon by the *Ummah*. It is only the Jahmiyyah and their fellow deviant groups such as the Mu'tazilah, the Rafidah and others who deny Allah's Attributes and the fact that He would be seen by the His righteous servants in Paradise who regard them as inauthentic. And these groups are the worst of Allah's creatures."(1)

What some Companions, their successors and the righteous predecessors said about seeing Allah:

Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman, may Allah be pleased with him, commented about Allah's statement,

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ﴾

'For those who have done good is Al-Husna and even more' saying: "It is glancing at Allah's (noble) Countenance."(2) Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father –: "Is it true that everyone who enters Paradise will see Allah?" He said: "Yes."(3)

'Ikrimah commented on Allah's statements,

﴿وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

'Some faces that Day shall be Naadirah (shining and radiant), looking at their Lord (Allah)'(4) *, saying: "The faces shall be radiant from delight, glancing at their Lord literally."*(5)

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(1) Majmu' *Fatawah* 3/391

(2) See: *Kitab At-Tawheed by Ibn Khuzaymah* p451,452; *Ash-Shari'ah by Al-Ajurri* p257; *Sharh I'tiqad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* 3/458; and *Kitab Al-Asma was-Sifat* by Al-Bayhaqi 2/33

(3) See: *Ash-Shari'ah by Al-Ajurri* p257

(4) *Surah Al-Qiyamah* 75:22-23

(5) See: *Ash-Shari'ah by Al-Ajurri* p256; and *Sharh I'tiqad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* 3/465

'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Abu Layla was reported to have said: "When the dwellers of Paradise would have entered it, they would told, 'You still have some rights which have not yet been given to you.' Then Allah – High and Exalted – will appear to them. Allah says,

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ﴾

'For those who have done good is Al-Husna and even more. (Yunus 10:26)

'Al-Husna' is Paradise and 'more' is the *honor* of glancing at their Lord.

﴿وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ﴾

'Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces', after seeing their Lord."(1)

Imaam Malik – may Allah have mercy upon him – said: "People (of Paradise) shall look at their Lord on the Day of Resurrection with their eyes."(2)

A script was brought to Imaam Ash-Shafi'i – may Allah have mercy upon him – with this question on it: "What is your opinion on Allah's statement,

﴿كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"Nay! Surely, they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day." (Al-Mutafiffin 83:15)?

He responded: "Since these (evil-doers) are being veiled from seeing Allah due to His wrath that is upon them, it follows then that those with whom He is pleased will be *honored* with seeing Him."

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(1) See: *Kitab At-Tawheed by Ibn Khuzaymah* 1/449; and *Sharh Usul I'tiqad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* 3/461

(2) *Sharh I'tiqad Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah* 3/510

Rabi' bin Sulayman then asked him: "Abu 'Abdullah, is that your opinion?" Ash-Shafi'i answered: "Yes, and I worship Allah upon that. If Muhammad bin Idris (meaning himself) had not believed that he would see Allah, he would not have worshipped Him!"(1)

Ibn Khuzaymah said: "The glance at Allah's Countenance that is going to be the prerogative of His sincere servants on the Day of Resurrection is the one referred to in Allah's statement:

﴿وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾﴾

"Some faces that Day shall be Naadirah (shining and radiant), looking at their Lord (Allah)." (Al-Qiyamah 75:22,23)

This honor will be conferred exclusively on Allah's sincere servants; and all His enemies from among the polytheists, the Jews, the Christians, the Magians and the hypocrites will be screened from seeing Him, as indicated in the following statement of Allah:

﴿كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ﴿١٥﴾﴾

"Nay! Surely, they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day." (Al-Mutaffifin 83:15)

This glancing at Allah's Countenance will occur after the dwellers of Paradise would have entered it and the dwellers of Hell would have entered it. Then Allah will increase the believers in *honor* and favor by granting them the privilege of letting them glance at His noble Countenance and screening all His enemies from having the glance.(2)

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: "An important thing that every Muslim must believe in is that the sincere believers will see their Lord in the Abode of the Hereafter on the Day of

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(1) Ibid 3/506

(2) See: *Kitab At-Tawheed* by Ibn Taymiyyah 1/443

Resurrection and after they would have entered Paradise. This is in accordance with the successive and authentic *Hadiths* in this regard. Glancing at Allah is the highest degree of delight in Paradise and the utmost goal of those who worship Him and are sincere in their worship. However, their seeing Allah would be of degrees according to their nearness to Allah and their knowledge about Him. Therefore, the belief of the generality of the righteous predecessors is that whoever denies that believers will see Allah in the Hereafter is a disbeliever."(1)

The Deniers and Response to their Arguments

The Jahmiyyah, Mu'tazilah and other similar erroneous groups are of the view that Allah will not be seen in the Hereafter. These groups have missed the correct path and are wallowing in the abyss of error and misguidance. For, they contradict the Prophet's Companions, their successors and the eminent Muslim scholars who were renowned for their righteousness, uprightness and leadership in religion.(2)

Evidence of the deniers:

They cite some proofs that, in reality, contradict them and do not support them, as it is going to be discussed shortly.

Their first evidence: Allah's statement:

﴿لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ﴾

"No vision can grasp Him, but He grasps all vision. He is Al-Lateef (the Most Subtle and Courteous), Well-Acquainted with all things." (Al-An'am 6:103)

They claim that this verse should be understood in its general sense, which means: no vision can grasp Allah neither in this world nor in the Hereafter.

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(1) *Majmu' Fatawa Ibn Taymiyyah* 6/485-486

(2) See: *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* p204

However, the verse the deniers of glancing are quoting in support of their view actually works against them. Ibn Al-Qayyim – may Allah have mercy upon him – mentioned that his Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah had provided the clearer, better and more convincing argument against their claim. He quoted him to have said: "I believe that whenever a liar attempts to use a verse of a *Hadith* in support of his erroneous view, that verse or *Hadith* always indicates what contradicts his view. Among such texts is this verse.(1) It actually indicates permissibility of seeing Allah more than otherwise, for Allah mentioned the verse in the context of laudation. The Lord praises Himself with negation of an attribute if such involves an existential matter. For example, He praises Himself through negation of slumber or sleeping, an attribute that implies His perfect self-existence; negation of death that implies perfect life; negation of tiredness or weakness that indicates His perfect and absolute power; negation of a partner, woman companion, child or supporter that indicates His perfect Lordship, exclusive right to be worshipped and absolute might; negation of eating and drinking that indicates His perfect self-sufficiency; negation of anyone's interceding with Him without His permission that indicates His perfect Oneness and His not standing in need of any of His creation; negation of injustice that indicates His perfect justice and knowledge; negation of forgetfulness and anything escaping His knowledge that indicates His perfect knowledge and encompassing of all things; and negation of an equal that indicates His perfect Being and Attributes. Hence, Allah does not praise Himself with sheer negation of an attribute that does not have an established existence; for a nonexistent attribute and the

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(1) i.e. *"No vision can grasp Him, but He grasps all vision. He is Al-Latîf (the Most Subtle and Courteous), Well-Acquainted with all things."* (Al-An'am 6:103)

one being described with that attribute are equal in inexistence. And the Perfect One is not described with an attribute that makes Him and an inexistent thing equals. If the verse, 'no vision can grasp Him' meant that He could never be seen in any way then it does not indicate any praise of Allah neither does it indicate any perfection of Him because; He and a non-existent thing share the same attribute of inexistence. This is because; something that is absolutely nonexistent can neither be seen nor grasped by any vision; and the Lord – High and Exalted – is far above praising Himself with an attribute of an absolutely nonexistent matter. Therefore, the meaning of the verse is: He can be seen but cannot be grasped or encompassed.

This fact is more illustrated in the context of the following verses:

﴿وَمَا يَعۡزُبُ عَن رَّبِّكَ مِن مِّثۡقَالِ ذَرَّةٖ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ وَلَا فِي ٱلسَّمَآءِ﴾

"And nothing is hidden from your Lord (so much as) the weight of an atom (or small ant) on the earth or in the heaven." (Yunus 10:61)

This verse indicates that Allah knows everything.

﴿وَمَا مَسَّنَا مِن لُّغُوبٖ ٣٨﴾

"And nothing of fatigue touched Us." (Qaaf 50:38)

The verse indicates Allah's perfect and absolute power.

﴿وَلَا يَظۡلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدٗا ٤٩﴾

"And your Lord treats no one with injustice." (Al-Kahf 18:49)

This verse indicates Allah's perfect justice.

﴿لَا تَأْخُذُهُۥ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ﴾

"Neither slumber, nor sleep overtake Him." (Al-Baqarah 2:255) This verse indicates Allah's perfect self-sustenance.

﴿لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ﴾

"No vision can grasp Him" (Al-An'am 6:103)

This verse indicates the extent of Allah's greatness and that He is greater than all things; and that by His mightiness, He can never be grasped because to grasp something means to encompass it which is more than seeing. Therefore, each of seeing and grasping can be found together or separately. The Lord can be seen but cannot be grasped and can be known but cannot be encompassed"⁽¹⁾

In essence, the dwellers of Paradise will see their Lord with their naked eyes but they will not be able to grasp Him due to His mightiness; though He encompasses all things in knowledge.

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِۦ شَىْءٌ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلسَّمِيعُ ٱلْبَصِيرُ ١١﴾

"There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer." (Ash-Shura 42:11)

There is something that is seen and felt of the created signs of Allah: The sun. Its viewer cannot grasp it in its actual form. If the viewer attempts to fix his glance on its rays, he will be unable to see it; not because that the gazed object itself cannot be seen but because of the weakness of the viewer.⁽²⁾ And unto belongs the supreme example.

Abu Moosaa, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated: The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,

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(1) *Hadi Al-Arwah* p333-335
(2) See: *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* p209

was standing amongst us and he told us five things. He said:

"إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لَا يَنَامُ وَلَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يَنَامَ، يَخْفِضُ الْقِسْطَ وَيَرْفَعُهُ، يُرْفَعُ إِلَيْهِ عَمَلُ اللَّيْلِ قَبْلَ عَمَلِ النَّهَارِ وَعَمَلُ النَّهَارِ قَبْلَ عَمَلِ اللَّيْلِ، حِجَابُهُ النُّورُ لَوْ كَشَفَهُ لَأَحْرَقَتْ سُبُحَاتُ وَجْهِهِ مَا انْتَهَى إِلَيْهِ بَصَرُهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ".

"Verily the Exalted and Mighty Allah does not sleep, and it does not befit Him to sleep. He lowers the scale and lifts it. The deeds in the night are taken up to Him before the deeds of the day. And the deeds of the day are taken up to Him before the deeds of the night. His veil is the light. If he withdraws it (the veil), the splendour of His countenance would consume His creation so far as His sight reaches." (Recorded by Muslim)

So, powers given to the creatures in this world are generally weak powers. In the Hereafter, Allah – in His *honor* and favor – perfects the powers of human so that they could be able to see Him.

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The deniers of seeing Allah on the Day of Resurrection also cite another proof

They argue that when Prophet Moosaa, peace be upon him – asked Allah to show Himself to him, Allah said to him,

﴿لَن تَرَىٰنِي﴾

"You cannot see Me,"

using the conjunction *'lan'*, which, in Arabic, is an emphasised negation of a future action i.e. that the action will never happen. They said that it is like Allah's statement:

﴿لَن يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوِ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ﴾

"Cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose." (Al-Hajj 22:73)

This argument of theirs is wrong, and it can be refuted with Allah's statement concerning the disbelieving Jews and their wish for death on the Day of Resurrection:

﴿وَلَن يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا﴾

"But they will never long for it because of what their hands have sent before them." (Al-Baqarah 2:95)

The conjunction used in the verse to describe their negation of longing for death is *'lan'* though they will actually long for it in the end after they have been thrown into Hell and they found the punishment therein unbearable. Allah informs us that they, along with other disbelievers, would say:

﴿وَنَادَوْا يَا مَالِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ﴾

"And they will cry: O Malik (Keeper of Hell)! Let your Lord make an end of us." (Az-Zukhruf 43:77)

Therefore, the conjunction *'lan'* in the verse, only negates the occurrence of what was requested for at the time of the request; not that it will never absolutely occur.(1) Similar examples abound in the Book of Allah.

In the light of the above, it is clear that *'lan'* does not indicate absolute negation. Any claim to the contrary is false, and lacks any sound support from the Qur'an or from any authentic source.(2) So, there is no proof for them in the verse; the verse is rather a proof against them.

As for their citing of the verse, 'Verily those on whom you call besides *Allah*, cannot create (even) a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose', the absolute negation is understood here without even the use of *'lan'*. This is because; creation and bringing things to existence are exclusive rights of Allah alone in which He has no partner or rival. Anything beside Allah is absolutely incapable of doing that.(3)

They also argued that seeing Allah is logically impossible. They adopt this argument as a result of their corrupt theories in which they equate the world of the Unseen with the present world. Today, science and technology have made possible occurrences, which no human reason influenced by the theories of the old Greek philosophy and Jahmiyyah, could not have accepted in the past. So, if these erroneous human theories could not restrict the occurrence of modern day science and technology, then how can they restrict the Divine world of the Unseen?!(4)

Therefore, the absolute truth is that all the believers will glance at the noble Countenance of their Lord on the Day of Resurrection with their naked eyes in delight and happiness, however much the deniers of Allah's Attributes may dislike that.[1]

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(1) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 14/233

(2) Ibid

(3) See: *'Azeem Al-Minna fi Ru'yatil-Mu'minina fil-Jannah* p30

(4) See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 11/351

Imaam Ahmad was once told that a man was claiming that Allah would not be seen in the Hereafter. Upon hearing that he was very angry and said: "Whoever claims that Allah would not be seen in the Hereafter has disbelieved, and Allah's curse and wrath are upon him, whoever he may be. Didn't Allah say, "Some faces that Day shall be Nâdirah (shining and radiant), looking at their Lord (*Allah*)'? Didn't He say,

﴿كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ عَن رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوبُونَ ١٥﴾

"Nay, surely, they (evil-doers) will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day"?

This is, indeed, a proof that the believers will see their Lord."[2]

We beseech Allah, the Merciful, the Lord of the Great Throne, to bless us with glancing at His noble Countenance and longing for meeting Him, without any hardship or misleading trial.

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[1] See: *Kitab At-Tawheed* by Ibn Khuzaymah 1/406,421

[2] See: *Kitab Ash-Shari'ah* p254

Allah's Saluting to Dwellers of Paradise and Addressing Them

Allah – High and Exalted – informs us in His noble Book that He would salute the dwellers of Paradise. He says in *Surah* Ya Sin:

﴿سَلَٰمٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبٍّ رَّحِيمٍ ٥٨﴾

"Salaam (peace be on you) - a Word from the Lord (Allah), Most Merciful." (Ya Sin 36:58)

After Allah has informed us that the dwellers of Paradise will be preoccupied with their everlasting bliss and delight with their spouses, enjoying different kinds of food and drinks under the shades of Paradise, reclining on couches and having whatever they desire; He also informs us about His salutation to them. The salutation will be real, as reported by Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father.[1]

To the dwellers of Paradise, their Lord's salutation to them will be the greatest and the most perfect thing; nothing will be dearer to them except glancing at the noble Countenance of their Lord, which is the ultimate goal and desire of the dwellers of Paradise.[2] The salutation indicates *honor*ing and holding them in high esteem by their Lord, Who is their Creator, Sustainer and Owner.[3]

When the Merciful and Generous Lord gives salutation of peace to the dwellers of Paradise, such gives them absolute peace and safety in all aspects; for theirs is the noblest salutation and theirs is the greatest bliss.[4]

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[1] See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p381; *Aysar At-Tafasir* p662; and *Fath Al-Qadeer* 4/380

[2] See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 26/94; *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 8/15/45

[3] See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 26/95; and *Tafseer Al-Qasimi* 14/81

[4] See: *Tayseer Al-Kareem Ar-Rahmaan* 6/355

Some scholars are of the view that Allah's salutation for the dwellers of Paradise will be through the angels who will convey Allah's salutation to them. They will enter upon them from every gate telling them, 'Peace be upon you, dwellers of Paradise, from your Merciful Lord'.(1) However, the most preponderant opinion – and Allah knows best – is that it is Allah Himself Who will salute them directly without an intermediary.(2)

This opinion has been mentioned by 'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Aziz – may Allah have mercy upon him – in his saying: "When the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell will have entered their respective abodes, Allah will walk amid the shades of clouds and in the midst of the angels. He would then stop upon the people of the first grade and salute them and they will return the salutation. This is in the Qur'an in Allah's statement:

﴿ سَلَٰمٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبٍّ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾ ﴾

"Salaam (peace be on you) - a Word from the Lord (Allah), Most Merciful." (Ya Sin 36:58)(3)

In short, the noble verse indicates Allah's salutation and addressing to the dwellers of Paradise.(4) There are *Hadiths* that indicate that Allah will address His righteous servants on the Day of Resurrection and in the Garden of Bliss. Some of these *Hadiths* are as follows:

Imaam Ahmad, Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of 'Adiyy bin Hatim, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

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(1) See: *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 4/23/547; *Tafseer Al-Baydawi* 2/285; and *Kitab At-Tas-hil fi 'Ulum at-Tanzeel* 3/361

(2) See: *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 8/23/38; and *Tayseer Al-Kareem Ar-Rahmaan* 6/355

(3) *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/23/21

(4) See: *Sharh Al-'Aqidah At-Tahawiyyah* p182

"مَا مِنكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا سَيُكَلِّمُهُ رَبُّهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَهُ تُرْجُمَانٌ وَلَا حِجَابٌ يَحْجُبُهُ"

"There will be none among you but his Lord will speak to him, and there will be no interpreter between them nor a screen to screen Him."

Safwan ibn Muhriz Al-Mazini narrated that they were with 'Abdullah bin 'Umar – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – while he was making circumambulation round the House when a man came to him and asked him, "What have you heard from Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, regarding An-Najwa?" Ibn 'Umar answered, "I heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say,

"يُدْنَى الْـمُؤْمِنُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يَضَعَ عَلَيْهِ كَنَفَهُ. ثُمَّ يُقَرِّرُهُ بِذُنُوبِهِ
فَيَقُولُ هَلْ: تَعْرِفُ؟ فَيَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ، أَعْرِفُ. حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ مِنْهُ مَا شَاءَ اللهُ
أَنْ يَبْلُغَ قَالَ: إِنِّي سَتَرْتُهَا عَلَيْكَ فِي الدُّنْيَا، وَأَنَا أَغْفِرُهَا لَكَ الْيَوْمَ"

'Everyone of you will come close to His Lord Who will screen him from the people and say to him, 'Did you do so-and-so?' He will reply, 'Yes.' Then Allah will say, 'Did you do so-and-so?' He will reply, 'Yes.' So Allah will question him and make him confess, and then Allah will say, 'I screened your sins in the world and forgive them for you today.'" (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Ibn Majah; and the version is Ibn Majah's)

Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated: "Once the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was preaching while a Bedouin was sitting there. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

”أَنَّ رَجُلًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ اسْتَأْذَنَ رَبَّهُ فِي الزَّرْعِ فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَلَسْتَ فِيمَا شِئْتَ
؟قَالَ: بَلَى،وَلَكِنِّي أُحِبُّ أَنْ أَزْرَعَ ، فَأَسْرَعَ وَبَذَرَ فَتَبَادَرَ الطَّرْفَ نَبَاتُهُ
وَاسْتِوَاؤُهُ وَاسْتِحْصَادُهُ وَ تَكْوِيرُهُ أَمْثَالَ الْجِبَالِ، فَيَقُولُ اللهُ تَعَالَى :دُونَكَ يَا
ابْنَ آدَمَ ،فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُشْبِعُكَ شَيْءٌ فَقَالَ الْأَعْرَابِيُّ:يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ لَا تَجِدُهَذَا إِلَّا
قُرَشِيًّا أَوْ أَنْصَارِيًّا، فَإِنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ زَرْعٍ، فَأَمَّا نَحْنُ فَلَسْنَا بِأَصْحَابِ زَرْعٍ“

“A man from among the people of Paradise will request Allah to allow him to cultivate the land Allah will say to him, ‘Haven’t you got whatever you desire?’ He will reply, ‘yes, but I like to cultivate the land (Allah will permit him and) he will sow the seeds, and within seconds the plants will grow and ripen and (the yield) will be harvested and piled in heaps like mountains. On that Allah will say (to him), ‘ Take, here you are, O son of Adam, for nothing satisfies you.’ On that the Bedouin said, ‘ O Allah’s Messenger! Such man must be either from Quraish or from *Ansaar*, for they are farmers while we are not.’ ” On that Allah’s Messenger smiled. (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

Abu Sa‘eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“Allah will say to the people of Paradise,‘O the people of Paradise!’ They will say, *‘Labbaik*, O our Lord, and *Sa’daik*, and all the good is in Your Hands!’ Allah will say, ‘ Are you satisfied?’ They will say, ‘Why shouldn’t we be satisfied, O our Lord as You have given us what You have not given to any of Your created beings?’ He will say, ‘Shall I not give you something better than that?’ They will say, ‘O our Lord! What else could be better than

that?’ He will say, ‘I bestow My Pleasure on you and will never be angry with you after that.’” (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”يُؤْتَى بِأَنْعَمِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَيُصْبَغُ فِي النَّارِ صَبْغَةً
ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ، هَلْ رَأَيْتَ خَيْرًا قَطُّ ؟هَلْ مَرَّ بِكَ نَعِيمٌ قَطُّ؟ فَيَقُولُ:
لَا وَاللهِ يَا رَبِّ.وَيُؤْتَى بِأَشَدِّ النَّاسِ بُؤْسًا فِي الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْـجَنَّةِ فَيُصْبَغُ
صَبْغَةً فِي الْـجَنَّةِ فَيُقَالُ لَهُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ بُؤْسًا قَطُّ؟ هَلْ مَرَّ بِكَ شِدَّةٌ
قَطُّ؟ فَيَقُولُ: لَا وَاللهِ يَا رَبِّ مَا مَرَّ بِي بُؤْسٌ قَطُّ ، وَلَا رَأَيْتُ شِدَّةً قَطُّ“ .

One amongst the dwellers of Hell who had led a life of ease and plenty amongst the people of the world would be made to dip in Fire only once on the Day of Resurrection and then it would be said to him: ‘O son of Adam, did you find any comfort, did you happen to get any material blessing?’ He would say: ‘By Allah, no, my Lord.’ And then that person from amongst the persons of the world be brought who had led the most miserable life (in the world) from amongst the dwellers of Paradise and he would be made to dip once in Paradise and it would be said to him. ‘O son of Adam, did you face, any hardship or had any distress fallen to your lot?’ And he would say: ‘By Allah, no, my Lord, never did I face any hardship or experience any distress.’ (Recorded by Muslim)

Therefore, the greatest bliss for the dwellers of Paradise will be their glancing at their Lord and His speaking to them. We ask Allah to include us among those He would salute and address on the Day of Judgment.

The Angels' Salutation to the Dwellers of Paradise and their Entering Upon them from Every Door

It is mentioned in the Book of Allah that the angels will be the first ones to salute the dwellers of Paradise and welcome them at its main gates. They will salute and congratulate them for their admittance to Paradise. Allah says in *Surah* Az-Zumar:

﴿ وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوْا۟ رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى ٱلْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتْ
أَبْوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَٱدْخُلُوهَا خَٰلِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾ ﴾

"And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups, till, when they reach it, and its gates will be opened (before their arrival for their reception) and its keepers will say: Salaamun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein.'" (Az-Zumar 39:73)

In this noble verse, Allah explains to us that the believers will be *honor*ably led to the eternal Gardens of Paradise in groups,[1] according to the degree of their merits.[2] When they arrive at the gates of Paradise, they will be stopped at a bridge between Paradise and Hell and mutual retaliation will be established among them regarding wrongs they have committed in the world against one another. After they are cleansed and purified (through the retaliation); they will be allowed to enter Paradise.[3] That is after the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, will have interceded on their behalf. The gates of Paradise will be opened for them and the keepers of Paradise will tell them: "Peace be upon you!" They will then be congratulated and given glad tiding of dwelling in Paradise forever.[4]

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[1] See: *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 8/15/286; *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 8/24/33; and *Tafseer Al-Qasimi* 14/220

[2] See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/24/35

[3] See: *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/110

[4] See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p84

The Angels' continuous greeting of the dwellers of Paradise and their entering upon them from every gate:

Allah says in the Qur'an:

﴿ جَنَّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَن صَلَحَ مِنْ ءَابَآئِهِمْ وَأَزْوَٰجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّٰتِهِمْ ۖ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ
عَلَيْهِم مِّن كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴿٢٣﴾ سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيْكُم بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى ٱلدَّارِ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

"'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens), which they shall enter and (also) those who acted righteously from among their fathers, and their wives, and their offspring. And angels shall enter unto them from every gate (saying):'Salaamun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you) for you persevered in patience! Excellent indeed is the final home!'" (Ar-Ra'd 13:23,24)

This noble verse means: The dwellers of Paradise and the righteous ones from among their fathers, wives and children will enter the Eden Gardens. The angels will enter upon them from every gate saying to them, "Peace be upon you, for your perseverance in obedience to your Lord. Excellent indeed is your final abode!"[1]

The angels' entering upon the people of Paradise indicates their *honor* and high esteem in which they are held.

There is also in the *Sunnah* an indication that the angels will enter upon the dwellers of Paradise and greet them. Imaam Ahmad recorded on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Al-'Aas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said to his Companions:

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[1] See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 8/13/141

"هَلْ تَدْرُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ الْـجَنَّةَ مِنْ خَلْقِ اللهِ؟ قَالُوا: اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ
،قَالَ: أَوَّلُ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ الْـجَنَّـةَ مِنْ خَلْقِ اللهِ الْفُقَرَاءُ{الْـمُهَاجِرُونَ} الَّذِينَ
تُسَدُّ بِهِمُ الثُّغُورُ وَيُتَّقَى بِهِمُ الْـمَكَارِهُ وَيَمُوتُ أَحَدُهُمْ وَحَاجَتُهُ فِي صَدْرِهِ، لَا
يَسْتَطِيعُ لَهَا قَضَاءً فَيَقُولُ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ: ائْتُوهُمْ فَحَيُّوهُمْ،
فَتَقُولُ الْـمَلَائِكَةُ: نَحْنُ سُكَّانُ سَمَائِكَ وَخِيرَتُكَ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ أَفَتَأْمُرُنَا أَنْ نَأْتِيَ
هَؤُلَاءِ فَنُسَلِّمَ عَلَيْهِمْ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا عِبَادًا يَعْبُدُونِّي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا،
وَتُسَدُّ بِهِمُ الثُّغُورُ وَيُتَّقَى بِهِمُ الْـمَكَارِهُ، وَيَمُوتُ أَحَدُهُمْ وَحَاجَتُهُ فِي صَدْرِهِ
لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ لَهَا قَضَاءً قَالَ: فَتَأْتِيهِمُ الْـمَلَائِكَةُ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ فَيَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ
كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴿سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ﴾"

"Do you know the first person to enter Paradise from among Allah's creation?" The Companions answered: "Allah and His Messenger know best." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, then said: "The first ones to enter Paradise of Allah's creation are the poor and the emigrants, those who with whom frontlines are manned and evils are repelled. One of them would die, with his worldly aspirations dying with him without being able to actualise them. Allah will say to whoever He wishes of His angels, 'Go to them and greet them.' The angels will say, 'We are the inhabitants of Your Heaven and the choicest of Your creatures! Are You commanding us to go to these people and greet them?!' Thereupon Allah will say, 'They were indeed servants who worshipped Me without associating any partner with Me. It is with them that frontlines are manned and evils are repelled. One of them would die, with his worldly aspirations dying with him without being able to actualise them.' The angels will then come to them and enter upon them from every gate saying, *"Peace be upon you for you persevered in patience! Excellent indeed is the final home!"*

Greeting of the Dwellers of Paradise in Paradise

The greeting of Muslims among themselves whenever they meet one another is *'AsSalaamu alaykum warahmatullaah wabarakaatuh'*, meaning: Peace, mercy and blessing of Allah be upon you.

It is also going to be the greeting of the people of Paradise among themselves.

Salaam (which means: the Giver of Peace) is one of Allah's Names. It has a great impact when it is mentioned in a greeting or in any other expression.

What is meant by this greeting in this world is invocation of peace and safety from all undesirables. For, safety is the best thing that is sought after in this world. If Allah gives life but does not give safety, such life will be full of pain, evil and calamity.

What the believers' greeting of one another on the Day of Resurrection would mean is felicitation with one another for the safety they enjoin from the envisaged horrors of that Day.(1)

There are verses in the Qur'an indicating that the format of the dwellers of Paradise's salutation of one another is '*Salaam*'. Among these verses are as follows:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِإِيمَٰنِهِمْۖ تَجْرِي
مِن تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ فِي جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ ﴿٩﴾ دَعْوَىٰهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَٰنَكَ ٱللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ
فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌۚ وَءَاخِرُ دَعْوَىٰهُمْ أَنِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾﴾

"Verily, those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, their Lord will guide them through their Faith; under them will flow rivers in the Gardens of delight (Paradise). Their way of request therein will be Subhaanaka Allaahumma (Glory to You, O Allah!)

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(1) See: *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 22/51

and Salaam (peace, safety from evil) will be their greetings therein (Paradise)! And the close of their request will be: Al-Hamdu Lillaahi Rabbil-'Alameen (all the praises and thanks are to Allah, the Lord of 'Alameen (mankind, jinn and all that exists))." (Yunus 10:9-10)

In the above two verses, Allah – High and Exalted – informs us that the greeting of the people of Paradise among themselves will be: *Salaam*, which means: I am saved and secured from the calamity of the dwellers of Hell.(1)

﴿ وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَمِلُوا۟ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ ﴾

"And those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah and His Messengers and whatever they brought) and did righteous deeds, will be made to enter Gardens under which rivers flow, - to dwell therein for ever (i.e. in Paradise), with the Permission of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be: Salaam (peace!)." (Ibraheem 14:23)

This noble verse indicates that those who believed in Allah and in His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and acted righteously by following lawful ways and abstaining from forbidden things, Allah would admit them to Gardens of Delight where their greeting among one another will be *'Salaam'* (Peace).(2)

﴿ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهُۥ سَلَٰمٌ ۚ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

"Their greeting on the Day they shall meet Him will be 'Salaam: Peace (i.e. the angels will say to them: Salaamun 'Alaikum)!" And He has prepared for them a generous reward (i.e. Paradise)." (Al-Ahzab 33:44)

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(1) See: *Jami 'Al-Bayan* 15/32; *Tafseer Al-Mawardi* 2/182; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 3/141

(2) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 8/13/203

In this verse, Allah – High and Exalted – informs us that the greeting of the believers among themselves on the Day of Resurrection shall be '*Salaam*' – Peace. They will say to one another: "We all have safety by being admitted to Paradise and being saved from the torment of Hell.(1)

﴿ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلَٰمًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ رِزْقُهُمْ فِيهَا بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا ﴿٦٢﴾ ﴾

"They shall not hear therein (in Paradise) any Laghw (dirty, false, evil, vain talk), but only Salaam (salutations of peace). And they will have therein their sustenance, morning and afternoon." (Maryam 19:62)

In this verse, Allah informs us that the dwellers of Paradise shall not hear therein any false or vain talk, and that all that they will hear is salutation of peace.(2)

Salaam is a name that connotes all that is good; and the dwellers of Paradise will hear nothing but that which they love. In Paradise, there is no idle talk, nor abuse or degradation or any sin.(3) The utterances therein shall be healthy such as remembrance of Allah, greeting, expressions of respect, statements that gladden the heart, glad tidings, address from the Merciful Lord and speeches from pure women of Paradise. Since the abode is that of peace, everything therein will be characterized with peace.(4)

Therefore, the meaning of '*Salaam*' in the verse is absolute safety from vanities and falsehoods.(5)

There is in the *Sunnah* reports that indicate that '*Salaam*' shall be the salutation of the dwellers of Paradise. Among these is the *Hadith* recorded by Ahmad on the authority of Mu'adh bin Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that he travelled to Syria and found the Christians there prostrating to their priests. He asked them for the reason for that and they told him, "That is the way the prophets who came before us were greeted." Mu'adh then said, "We are more deserving to do this with our Prophet." (When the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, heard of that) he said,

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(1) See: *Ibid*; and *Fat'h Al-Qadeer* 4/287

(2) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 9/16/102; *Adwa' Al-Bayan* 4/335; and *Aysar At-Tafaseer* 3/27

(3) See: *Tafseer Al-Baydawi* 2/35; and *Tafseer An-Nasafi* 3/40

(4) See: *Tayseer Al-Kareem* Ar-Rahmaan 5/124

(5) See: *Tafseer Al-Mawardi* 2/531; and *Zad Al-Maseer* 5/247

"إِنَّهُمْ كَذَبُوا عَلَى أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ كَمَا حَرَّفُوا كِتَابَهُمْ، إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَبْدَلَنَا خَيْرًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ: السَّلَامَ تَحِيَّةَ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ".

"They (the Christians) have invented a lie against their prophets as they have altered their Scriptures. Allah has indeed substituted for us a better greeting: '*Salaam*', which is the salutation of the dwellers of Paradise."

The Dwellers of Paradise's Praising Allah and Thanking Him for the Favor He Bestowed Upon them

Before they enter it, the dwellers of Paradise will pass through horrors and frightful situations such as standing on the Day of Resurrection for reckoning, flying of records of deeds, weighing of deeds and passing over the Bridge. Then Allah will – out of His mercy, magnanimity and favor – admit them into the Gardens of Bliss. When they see what Allah has prepared for them in Paradise of what no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard and no human mind has ever imagined, they will raise their voices in praising Him and expressing gratitude to Him for this great blessing.(1)

There are verses in the Qur'an indicating that the dwellers of Paradise will praise Allah after entering it. Some are as follows:

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(1) See: *Al-Yawm Al-Akhir, Al-Jannah wan-Naar* by 'Umar Sulaiman Al-Ashqar p265

﴿ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفۡسًا إِلَّا وُسۡعَهَآ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلۡجَنَّةِۖ هُمۡ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَنَزَعۡنَا مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنۡ غِلّٖ تَجۡرِى مِن تَحۡتِهِمُ ٱلۡأَنۡهَٰرُۖ وَقَالُواْ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى هَدَىٰنَا لِهَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهۡتَدِىَ لَوۡلَآ أَنۡ هَدَىٰنَا ٱللَّهُۖ لَقَدۡ جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِٱلۡحَقِّۖ وَنُودُوٓاْ أَن تِلۡكُمُ ٱلۡجَنَّةُ أُورِثۡتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾

One: *"But those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism), and worked righteousness - We tax not any person beyond his scope - such are the dwellers of Paradise. They will abide therein. And We shall remove from their breasts any (mutual) hatred or sense of injury (which they had, if at all, in the life of this world); rivers flowing under them, and they will say:'All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has guided us to this, and never could we have found guidance, were it not that Allah had guided us! Indeed, the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth.' And it will be cried out to them: ' This is the Paradise which you have inherited for what you used to do.'"* (Al-A'raaf 7:42,43)

In the above verses, Allah informs us that the Muslims who believed in Allah and His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and accepted all that came from Allah, and acted in accordance with Allah's injunctions by carrying out obligations and abstaining from unlawful things are the ones who will enter Paradise with permission of Allah and through His favor.(1) They will abide therein forever and ever. They will never be expelled from there nor will they ever be denied of its delights. Allah will remove from their hearts all ill feelings such as jealousy, rancour, hatred and enmity; and they will have rivers flowing from beneath them.(2)

When they realize the *honor* that Allah has conferred on them and discover the disgraceful torment He has saved them from, they will praise and thank Him for all that. For, had it not been for His favor, they could not have been guided to the right path that led to Paradise.(1) Allah says:

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(1) See: *Fi Zilal Al-Qur'an* 3/8/1291

(2) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 5/8/183

﴿فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَعْطَىٰ وَٱتَّقَىٰ (٥) وَصَدَّقَ بِٱلْحُسْنَىٰ (٦) فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُۥ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ (٧)﴾

“As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah and fears Him, We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness).” (Al-Layl 92:5-7)

So, it is Allah Who made righteous deeds easy for the dwellers of Paradise. Had it not been for His mercy and facilitation, they could not have been guided to the righteous deeds.

They would say, thanking Allah with their tongues and expressing their happiness, “All praise is due to Allah, Who has guided us in the world to the correct faith and righteous deeds for which this delight is the reward. We could not, on our own, have been rightly guided, had Allah not guided us by making it easy for us to follow His Messengers and helping us through His special mercy in addition to the natural guidance and means of attaining the same He has created in us.(2)

Their statement, ‘the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth’, is a continuation of their expression of happiness. With this statement, they will recollect causes of their guidance and will derive enjoyment is doing so. For, mentioning a loved matter increases one in enjoyment of it.(3)

After their praising Allah and expressing gratitude to Him and their glad recollection, an announcer will inform them that, ‘This

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(1) See: *Ibid* 5/8/184

(2) See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 8/421-422

(3) See: *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 8/133

is the Paradise which you have inherited through Allah’s mercy and His making it easy for you to do righteous deeds.’(1)

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَعَمِلُواْ ٱلصَّٰلِحَٰتِ يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِإِيمَٰنِهِمْ ۖ تَجْرِى
مِن تَحْتِهِمُ ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ فِى جَنَّٰتِ ٱلنَّعِيمِ (٩) دَعْوَىٰهُمْ فِيهَا سُبْحَٰنَكَ ٱللَّهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ
فِيهَا سَلَٰمٌ ۚ وَءَاخِرُ دَعْوَىٰهُمْ أَنِ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ (١٠)﴾

Two: *“Verily, those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, their Lord will guide them through their Faith; under them will flow rivers in the Gardens of delight (Paradise). Their way of request therein will be Subhaanaka Allahumma* (Glory to You, O Allah!) *and Salaam (peace, safety from evil) will be their greetings therein (Paradise)! and the close of their request will be: Al-Hamdu Lillaahi Rabbil-‘Alameen [all the praises and thanks are to Allah, the Lord of ‘Alamîn (mankind, jinn and all that exists)].”* (Yunus 10:9,10)

In the above two verses, Allah informs us about the situation of the fortunate ones who believed in Him and His Messengers and obeyed Him. He informs us that He would guide them to the paths of Paradise with the light of their faith. This is Mujahid’s comment on this verse.(2)

The verse indicates that it is Allah alone Who deserves all praise in this world and in Hereafter and in all situations. The people of Paradise will praise Allah and be grateful to Him for His many blessings upon them, and such will increase and multiply unceasingly. All praise is due to Allah!(3)

Jabir ibn ‘Abdullah – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“يُلْهَمُونَ التَّسْبِيحَ وَالتَّحْمِيدَ كَمَا تُلْهَمُونَ النَّفَسَ”

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(1) See: *Jami’ Al-Bayan* 5/8/185

(2) See: *Tafseer Mujahid* 1/292

(3) See: *Tafseer Al-Qur’an Al-‘Azeem* 4/187

"They will glorify Allah and praise Him (in Paradise) as easily as they breathe." (Recorded by Muslim)

﴿ جَنَّٰتُ عَدۡنٖ يَدۡخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوۡنَ فِيهَا مِنۡ أَسَاوِرَ مِن ذَهَبٖ وَلُؤۡلُؤٗاۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمۡ فِيهَا حَرِيرٞ
٣٣ وَقَالُواْ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَذۡهَبَ عَنَّا ٱلۡحَزَنَۖ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٞ شَكُورٌ ٣٤ ٱلَّذِىٓ
أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ ٱلۡمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضۡلِهِۦ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٞ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٞ ٣٥ ﴾

Three: *"'Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens) will they enter, therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and their garments there will be of silk. And they will say: 'All the praises and thanks are to Allah, Who has removed from us (all) grief. Verily, our Lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense). Who, out of His Grace, has lodged us in a home that will last forever, where toil will touch us not nor weariness will touch us.' "* (Fatir 35:33-35)

Allah informs us in this noble verse that He would admit His selected servants to the Gardens of Eden and that they would be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls and silk garments. They will praise Allah Who took away from them all sorrows; they will exalt Him for forgiving their sins and rewarding their good deeds and admitting them into the eternal abode where they will never be asked to leave – an abode where there will be no toil, difficulty or pain.(1)

﴿ وَسِيقَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّقَوۡاْ رَبَّهُمۡ إِلَى ٱلۡجَنَّةِ زُمَرًاۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوهَا وَفُتِحَتۡ
أَبۡوَٰبُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمۡ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلَٰمٌ عَلَيۡكُمۡ طِبۡتُمۡ فَٱدۡخُلُوهَا خَٰلِدِينَ ٧٣
وَقَالُواْ ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى صَدَقَنَا وَعۡدَهُۥ وَأَوۡرَثَنَا ٱلۡأَرۡضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ
حَيۡثُ نَشَآءُۖ فَنِعۡمَ أَجۡرُ ٱلۡعَٰمِلِينَ ٧٤ ﴾

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(1) See:

Four: *"And those who kept their duty to their Lord will be led to Paradise in groups, till, when they reach it, and its gates will be opened (before their arrival for their reception) and its keepers will say: Salaamun 'Alaikum (peace be upon you)! You have done well, so enter here to abide therein. And they will say: ' All the praises and thanks are to Allah Who has fulfilled His Promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell in Paradise where we will; how excellent a reward for the (pious good) workers!' "* (Az-Zumar 39:73,74)

According to the above two verses, the pious servants of Allah will be led to Paradise in an *honor*able manner and in groups until they reach its gates. They will request that the gates be opened for them and they will be opened. The keepers of Paradise will receive them saying: "Peace be upon you?" They will then inform them of Allah's guarantee of security for them; and no harm or evil will touch them after that. The keepers will also congratulate them for having performed good deeds while they were in the world, and that it is as a result of their good deeds that they will have pleasant stay in Paradise. When the dwellers of Paradise see the great reward, generous gift and eternal delight that Allah has prepared for them they will praise Him for fulfilling His promise to them and for making the earth of Paradise an inheritance for them, allowing them to move about therein as they like.(1)

In the *Sunnah*, there are many reports indicating that the dwellers of Paradise will praise their Lord after being admitted therein.

Jabir bin Abdullah – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – narrated that Allah's Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

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(1) See: *Jami' Al-Bayan* 12/34-37; *Ma'allim At-Tanzeel* 5/24/30; *Tafseer Al-Baydawi* 2/232; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/113

“يَأْكُلُ أَهْلُ الْـجَنَّةِ فِيهَا وَيَشْرَبُونَ، وَلَا يَتَغَوَّطُونَ وَلَا يَمْتَخِطُونَ وَلَا يَبُولُونَ،
وَلَكِنْ طَعَامُهُمْ ذَاكَ جُشَاءٌ كَرَشْحِ الْمِسْكِ، يُلْهَمُونَ التَّسْبِيحَ وَالْـحَمْدَ كَمَا
تُلْهَمُونَ النَّفَسَ“ .

“The dwellers of Paradise would eat therein and they would also drink, but they would neither void excrement, nor suffer catarrh, nor pass water, and their eating (would be digested) in the form of belching and their sweat would be musk they would glorify and praise Allah as easily as you breathe.” (Recorded by Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“أَوَّلُ زُمْرَةٍ تَلِجُ الْـجَنَّةَ صُورُهُمْ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ، لَا يَبْصُقُونَ
فِيهَا وَلَا يَمْتَخِطُونَ وَلَا يَتَغَوَّطُونَ فِيهَا، آنِيَتُهُمْ وَأَمْشَاطُهُمْ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ
وَالْفِضَّةِ، وَمَجَامِرُهُمْ مِنَ الْأَلُوَّةِ وَرَشْحُهُمُ الْمِسْكُ، وَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمْ
زَوْجَتَانِ، يُرَى مُخُّ سَاقِهِمَا مِنْ وَرَاءِ اللَّحْمِ مِنَ الْـحُسْنِ، لَا اخْتِلَافَ بَيْنَهُمْ
وَلَا تَبَاغُضَ، قُلُوبُهُمْ قَلْبٌ وَاحِدٌ يُسَبِّحُونَ اللهَ بُكْرَةً وَعَشِيًّا“ .

“The (members of the) first group that would be admitted to Paradise would have their faces as bright as full moon during the night. They would neither spit nor suffer catarrh, nor void excrement. They would have their utensils and their combs made of gold and silver and the fuel of their braziers would be aloes and their sweat would be musk and every one of them would have two spouses (so beautiful) that the marrow of their shanks would be visible through the flesh. There would be no dissension amongst them and no enmity in their hearts. Their hearts would be like one heart, glorifying Allah morning and evening.” (Recorded by

Al-Bukhari and Muslim and the version is Muslim's)

In another *Hadith* recorded by Muslim on the authority of Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, mentioned the dwellers of Paradise will say *Takbeer (Allahu Akbar)* as easily as they breathe.

In his comment on this *Hadith*, Ibn Hajar – may Allah have mercy upon him – said that the point of similarity is that man breathes naturally and inevitably without any effort from him; so will glorifying Allah and praising Him be part of the nature of dwellers of Paradise. The reason for this is that their hearts have been illuminated by their knowledge of their Lord – High and Exalted – and have become filled with His love; and whoever loves something mentions it frequently.(1)

The dwellers of Paradise will also read the Qur'an there. At-Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

“يُقَالُ لِصَاحِبِ الْقُرْآنِ: اقْرَأْ وَارْتَقِ، وَرَتِّلْ كَمَا كُنْتَ تُرَتِّلُ فِي الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّ
مَنْزِلَـتَكَ عِنْدَ آخِرِ آيَةٍ تَقْرَأُبِهَا“

“The one who frequently reads the Qur'an in this world will be told (on the Day of Resurrection after entering Paradise): “Read, get elevated (to the high degrees of Paradise) and recite as you used to do in the world! For, your position will be at the last verse you read!”

The glorification and praising of Allah as well as recitation of the Qur'an that the dwellers of Paradise will do there is not out of obligation. For, Paradise is an abode of reward and not of any obligation. They are rather actions they are made to do so naturally and so easily as they breathe, as indicated in the *Hadith* narrated by Jabir. Allah knows best.[1]

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(1) See: *Fat'h Al-Bari* 6/326; and *Sharh As-Sunnah* 15/213

According to Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy upon him, the people of Paradise would glorify Allah and praise Him as easily as they breathe. This is not an action they are obliged to perform and for which a separate reward will be set aside. Rather, it will be part of the bliss they will enjoy in the abode of delight. Though these are of actions for which rewards are earned in this world, in the Hereafter they will become part of the delight that the dwellers of Paradise will enjoy like eating, drinking and having sexual intercourse with one's spouse.[2]

We beseech Allah to include us among the dwellers of Paradise. He is All-Hearer, Answerer of supplications and He has power over all things.

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[1] See: *Al-Jannah wan-Nar* by Al-Ashqar p253

[2] See: *Majmu' Al-Fatawa* 4/330

Allah says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ ٱدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَٰمٍ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾
وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَٰنًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَٰبِلِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾
لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾﴾

"Truly! The Muttaqoon (pious and righteous persons - see V.2:2) will be amidst Gardens and water-springs (Paradise). "(It will be said to them): 'Enter therein (Paradise), in peace and security.' "And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have). (So they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones. No sense of fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave it.' " (Al-Hijr 15:45-48)

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Characteristics of Dwellers of Paradise

Physical and Behavioral Characteristics of Dwellers of Paradise:

Indeed, physical and behavioral characteristics upon which Allah created the creation in this world are different. The creatures vary in their shapes, images, colors, beauty, ages, heights and languages. Each individual human being in this world is different and distinct from the other physically and behaviorally. As for the dwellers of Paradise, there is no difference between them either physically or behaviorally.

The glorious Qur'an indicates that all of them will be of excellent behavior. Allah says in *Surah* Al-Hijr:

﴿ إِنَّ ٱلْمُتَّقِينَ فِى جَنَّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿٤٥﴾ ٱدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَٰمٍ ءَامِنِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَنَزَعْنَا
مَا فِى صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَٰنًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَٰبِلِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيهَا
نَصَبٌ وَمَا هُم مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾

"Truly! The *Muttaqoon* (pious and righteous persons - see V.2:2) will be amidst Gardens and water-springs (Paradise).(It will be said to them): 'Enter therein (Paradise), in peace and security.' "And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have). (So they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones. No sense of fatigue shall touch them, nor shall they (ever) be asked to leave it."
(Al-Hijr 15:45-48)

In the above verses, Allah informs us that heart diseases such as hatred, rancour, jealousy, spite and enmity will be removed from the hearts of the dwellers of Paradise so that they can become brethren, sincerely loving one another; and that with this

strong mutual love and good manners, they will be facing each other. No one will turn his back to the other. Their relationship with one another will be purified and free of lustful and spiteful forces. For, Allah will recreate them in the most pleasant form in the Hereafter and give them perfect and complete life that is absolutely different from the life they used to live in this world. Nothing of the behavioural diseases of this world will be found in them.

At-Tabari recorded that 'Imraan bin Talhah bin Zubayr entered upon 'Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, after the latter had finished with those who fought against him in the Battle of the Camel and said to him, "I hope that Allah will include me and your father among those He describes as, "And We shall remove from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have)."(1)

However, the noble verse generally applies to the people of Paradise because it is the general application of the verse that is reckoned with. This is substantiated by the *Hadith* recorded by Al-Bukhari on the authority of Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"يَخْلُصُ الْـمُؤْمِنُونَ مِنَ النَّارِ فَيُحْبَسُونَ عَلَى قَنْطَرَةٍ بَيْنَ الْـجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ، فَيُقَصُّ لِبَعْضِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ مَظَالِمُ كَانَتْ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا ، حَتَّى إِذَا هُذِّبُوا وَنُقُّوا أُذِنَ لَـهُمْ فِي دُخُولِ الْـجَنَّةِ ،فَوَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَأَحَدُهُمْ أَهْدَى بِمَنْزِلِهِ فِي الْـجَنَّةِ مِنْهُ بِمَنْزِلِهِ كَانَ فِي الدُّنْيَا".

"The believers, after being saved from the (Hell) Fire, will be stopped at a bridge between Paradise and Hell and mutual retaliation will be established among them regarding wrongs they have committed in the world against one another. After they are cleansed and purified (through the retaliation), they will be admitted into Paradise; and by Him in Whose Hand Muhammad's soul is, everyone of them will know his dwelling in Paradise better than he knew his dwelling in this world."

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(1) Ibid.

The *Hadith* perfectly concurs with the noble verse. The Lord of Glory and Majesty will remove from the hearts of the dwellers of Paradise all diseases such as hatred, spite and rancour. They will live in Paradise as brethren with their thrones facing one another.[1]

There are no verses in the Qur'an that describe the physical characteristics of the dwellers of Paradise. Such description is only found in the *Sunnah*.

Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"إِنَّ أَوَّلَ زُمْرَةٍ يَدْخُلُونَ الْـجَنَّةَ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ ، وَالَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ
عَلَى أَشَدِّ كَوْكَبٍ دُرِّيٍّ فِي السَّمَاءِ إِضَاءَةً ،لاَ يَبُولُونَ وَلاَ يَتَغَوَّطُونَ وَلاَ
يَمْتَخِطُونَ وَلاَ يَتْفُلُونَ ،أَمْشَاطُهُمُ الذَّهَبُ ، وَرَشْحُهُمُ الْمِسْكُ، وَمَجَامِرُهُمُ
الْأَلُوَّةُ ، وَأَزْوَاجُهُمُ الْـحُورُ الْعِينُ، أَخْلاَقُهُمْ عَلَى خُلُقِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ عَلَى
صُورَةِ أَبِيهِمْ آدَمَ ، سِتُّونَ ذِرَاعًا فِى السَّمَاءِ".

"The (members of the) first group that would be admitted to Paradise would have their faces as bright as full moon during the night. They would neither spit nor suffer catarrh, nor void excrement. They would have their utensils and their combs made

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(1) See: *Jami' al-Bayan* 8/14/38; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 3/14/404; and *Tasfeer Ath-Tha'alabi* 2/295

of gold and silver and the fuel of their braziers would be aloes and their sweat would be musk and every one of them would have two spouses (so beautiful) that the marrow of their shanks would be visible through the flesh. There would be no dissension amongst them and no enmity in their hearts. Their hearts would be like one heart, glorifying Allah morning and evening." (Recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim and the version is Muslim's)

As regarding the description of Adam's stature, Al-Bukhari recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah – may Allah be pleased with him that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"خَلَقَ اللهُ آدَمَ وَطُولُهُ سِتُّونَ ذِرَاعًا، ثُمَّ قَالَ: اذْهَبْ فَسَلِّمْ عَلَى أُولَئِكَ مِنَ
الْـمَلَائِكَةِ، فَاسْتَمِعْ مَا يُحَيُّونَكَ تَحِيَّتُكَ وَتَحِيَّةُ ذُرِّيَّتِكَ ، فَقَالَ: السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَقَالُوا: السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ، فَزَادُوهُ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ، فَكُلُّ مَنْ يَدْخُلُ الْـجَنَّةَ
عَلَى صُورَةِ آدَمَ ، فَلَمْ يَزَلِ الْـخَلْقُ يَنْقُصُ حَتَّى الْآنَ"

"Allah created Adam, making him sixty cubits tall. When He created him, He said to him, 'Go and greet that group of angels, and listen to their reply, for it will be your greeting (salutation) and the greeting (salutations of your offspring.' So, Adam said (to the angels), *As-Salaamu Alaikum* (i.e. Peace be upon you). The angels said, *"As-salaamu Alaika wa Rahmatullahi"* (i.e. Peace and Allah's Mercy be upon you). Thus the angels added to Adam's salutation the expression, *'Wa Rahmatullahi'*. Any person who will enter Paradise will resemble Adam (in appearance and figure). People have been decreasing in stature since Adam's creation."

Al-Bukhari and Muslim also recorded on the authority of Sahl bin Sa'd As-Sa'eedi, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”لَيَدْخُلَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي سَبْعُونَ أَلْفًا أَوْ سَبْعُ مِائَةِ أَلْفٍ ، لَا يَدْرِي أَبُو حَازِمٍ أَيُّهُمَا قَالَ: مُتَمَاسِكُونَ آخِذٌ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا ، لَا يَدْخُلُ أَوَّلُهُمْ حَتَّى يَدْخُلَ آخِرُهُمْ ، وُجُوهُهُمْ عَلَى صُورَةِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ“

“Seventy-thousand or seven-hundred thousand of my followers (the narrator is in doubt as to the correct number) will enter Paradise holding each other till the first and the last of them enter Paradise at the same time, and their faces will have a glitter like that of the moon at night when it is full.”(This is Muslim's wording.)

Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ لَسُوقًا يَأْتُونَهَا كُلَّ جُمُعَةٍ، فَتَهُبُّ رِيحُ الشِّمَالِ فَتَحْثُو فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ وَثِيَابِهِمْ، فَيَزْدَادُونَ حُسْنًا وَجَمَالًا فَيَرْجِعُونَ إِلَى أَهْلِيهِمْ وَقَدِ ازْدَادُوا حُسْنًا وَجَمَالًا، فَيَقُولُ لَهُمْ أَهْلُوهُمْ: وَاللهِ لَقَدِ ازْدَدْتُمْ بَعْدَنَا حُسْنًا وَجَمَالًا، فَيَقُولُونَ: وَأَنْتُمْ وَاللهِ! لَقَدِ ازْدَدْتُمْ بَعْدَنَا حُسْنًا وَ جَمَالًا“

“In Paradise there is a marketplace to which they would come every Friday. The north wind will blow and would scatter fragrance on their faces and on their clothes and would add to their beauty and loveliness, and then they would go back to their family after having an added lustre to their beauty and loveliness, and their family would say to them: By Allah, you have been increased in beauty and loveliness after leaving us, and they would say: By Allah, you have also increased in beauty and loveliness after us.”(This is Muslim's wording).

Ahmad and others recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”يَدْخُلُ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ الْجَنَّةَ جُرْدًا مُرْدًا بِيضًا ، جِعَادًا مُكَحَّلِينَ أَبْنَاءَ أَوْ ثَلَاثٍ وَثَلَاثِينَ عَلَى خَلْقِ آدَمَ سِتُّونَ ذِرَاعًا فِي عَرْضِ سَبْعِ أَذْرُعٍ“.

“The dwellers of Paradise will enter it in a state of purity (from all imperfections), beardless and wearing kohl. Their age will be thirty-three years, sixty cubit tall and seven cubits broad like (their father) Adam.”

At-Tirmidhi also recorded the above report but with the addition:

”لَا يَغْنَى شَبَابُهُمْ، وَلَا تَبْلَى ثِيَابُهُمْ“

“Their youthfulness will be everlasting and their garments will never wear out.”

Al-Mundhiri recorded in his work, *'At-Tarheeb'*, on the authority of Al-Miqdam, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَمُوتُ سِقْطًا وَلَا هَرِمًا- وَإِنَّمَا النَّاسُ فِيمَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ -إِلَّا بُعِثَ ابْنَ ثَلَاثٍ وَثَلَاثِينَ سَنَةً فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ {كَانَ} عَلَى مَسْحَةِ آدَمَ وَصُورَةِ يُوسُفَ، وَقَلْبِ أَيُّوبَ ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ عَظُمُوا وَفَخُمُوا كَالْجِبَالِ“.

“No person will die – ranging from a miscarried foetus to death through old age, for the situation with all humans lie in between the two – except that Allah resurrects him as a person of three-years of age. If he happens to be among the dwellers of Paradise, he will be in the shape of Adam, handsomeness of Yusuf and with the heart of Ayyoob (Job), peace be upon them all. But if they happen to be among the dwellers of Hell, then they will be blown and magnified that they be will like mountains in hugeness.”

This *Hadith* indicates that shapes of children of the believers will be completed and perfected as they are admitted to Paradise.

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah was asked about children of the believers – both male and female – who died young as to whether they would remain in their condition in which they died or they would grow up and marry. He responded:

"All praise is due to Allah. When they enter Paradise, they will enter it like adults, resembling Adam in appearance and figure, sixty cubits tall and seven cubits broad. They will marry like adults. If any Muslim woman or man dies unmarried, he or she will marry in the Hereafter. Allah knows best."(1)

As for the language that dwellers of Paradise will speak, there is a report from Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that he said that their language would be Arabic.(2)

In short, the hearts, faces and behaviors of the dwellers of Paradise will be like that of one man. They will all resemble their father Adam, peace be upon him – in appearance, beauty and shape. They will be purified from all imperfections; and they will be beardless, have curly hair and wear kohl. Their age will be thirty-three, which is the peak of youthfulness. They would neither pass urine nor excrement. Neither would they spit or suffer catarrh. Their beauty may be of varying degrees. The first group that would enter Paradise would be as beautiful as full moon and the next group would be like the most brilliant stars and so on.(3)

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(1) *Majmu' Al-Fataawa* 4/310

(2) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p429; and *Abwab Az-Ziyadat fiz-Zuhd* p71

(3) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p191 and *Al-Jannah wan-Naar* p221

The Dwellers of Paradise will have Servants

Paradise is a place where there will be no tiredness or hardship. Yet, Allah informs us that its dwellers will have servants there. This is indeed, the peak of delight. There are verses in the Qur'an that explicitly mention that the dwellers of Paradise will have servants.

Allah says:

﴿وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِلْمَانٌ لَّهُمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَّكْنُونٌ ﴿٢٤﴾﴾

"And there will go round boy-servants of theirs, to serve them as if they were preserved pearls." (At-Toor 52:24)

In this noble verse, Allah informs us about the young boys of Paradise who will go round its dwellers as servers.(1) Allah informs us here that the servers would be boys. They are young men who have just reached the age of maturity. This is because; people at that age are usually very active and generally do not hesitate in carrying out whatever obligation assigned to them.(2)

These young people are especially created for serving the dwellers of Paradise. They are different from servants of this world in the sense that those of this world serve their leaders and masters due to benefits they could get from them. As for those of Paradise, their serving of its dwellers is exclusively for the benefits of the dwellers.(3)

Allah also likens the boys in their purity and beauty to preserved pearls. This comparison indicates their astounding handsomeness and amazing fairness of their color. The message is: If the servers, who are of the lowest grade in Paradise, could be this handsome, then one could imagine the handsomeness of the served? There is no doubt that he will be far more handsome. There is a report that the merit of the served over that of the server is like superiority of the full moon over other stars.(1)

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(1) See: *Ma'alaim At-Tanzeel* 5/27/236; *Zad Al-Maseer* 8/52; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 7/410

(2) See: *At-Tahreer wat-Tanweer* 27/55

(3) See: *Al-Kash-shaf* 4/24; *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 9/27/34; and *Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 28/254

In another verse, Allah says:

﴿يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾﴾

"Immortal boys will go around them (serving)." (Al-Waqi'ah 56:17)

In this verse, Allah describes the boys as immortal. This is because; they will never die and will eternally remain in their youthfulness and will never grow old.

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said: These young boys are children of the people of the world (who died young). They do not have any sins for which they would be punished neither do they have any righteous deeds for which they could be rewarded. That is why they are given this status.(2) But there is no proof for this opinion. This will be discussed shortly, *insha Allah*.

In *Surah Al-Insaan*, Allah says:

﴿وَيَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَّنثُورًا ﴿١٩﴾﴾

"And round about them will (serve) boys of everlasting youth. If you see them, you would think them scattered pearls." (Al-Insaan 76:19)

In this verse, Allah tells us that these boys are many and are never found sitting idle. Rather, they are rather scattered everywhere in Paradise, busy serving its dwellers. This is

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(1) See: *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 9/17/69

(2) See: *Tafseer Mujahid* 2/646; *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/27/174; *Zad Al-Maseer*8/135

supported by the following *Hadith*:

Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him,narrated that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

"The lowest of all the dwellers of Paradise in grade will be a man who will have ten thousand servants standing at his service, each of them holding a plate of gold and another of silver. Each of the plates will contain a kind of food that is not in another. He will find the last part of the food as much as pleasant and delicious as the first part thereof. (He will neither pass urine nor stool) but only sweat that will smell like musk; and He will neither blow his nose, nor spit." (Recorded by Ibn Abu Dunya and At-Tabarani)

It is reported on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that he said: "There is none from among the dwellers of Paradise who will not have a thousand boy-servants. Each of them will have a responsibility different from that of another."(1)

There is a difference among the scholars as regards the origin of the boys who will serve the dwellers of Paradise as to whether they are children of this world or not?

Some say they are children of the dwellers of Paradise who died young (before reaching the age of puberty) and preceded their parents in death. They have neither good deeds nor sins. So Allah comforts the eyes of such parents from among the dwellers of Paradise by admitting their children into Paradise.(2)

There is, however, no proof for this. Rather, there is an authentic

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(1) *Jami' Al-Bayan* 4/29/221; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 5/27/236; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 8/317

(2) See: *Tafseer Mujahid* 2/646; *Jami' Al-Bayan* 13/27/174; *Tafseer Al-Mawardi* 4/114; *Zad Al-Maseer* 8/135; *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 9/17/69; and *Hadi Al-Arwah* p255

Hadith that indicates that when the children of those who are to enter Paradise die, it will be said to them, "Enter Paradise!" But they will refuse to enter it until their fathers have entered. Imaam Ahmad recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمَيْنِ يَمُوتُ لَهُمَا ثَلَاثَةُ أَوْلَادٍ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحِنْثَ ، إِلَّا أَدْخَلَهُمَا اللهُ وَإِيَّاهُمْ
بِفَضْلِ رَحْمَتِهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَقَالَ: يُقَالُ لَهُمْ: ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ. قَالَ: فَيَقُولُونَ حَتَّى يَجِيءَ أَبَوَانَا،
قَالَ: ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ فَيَقُولُونَ: مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ فَيُقَالُ لَهُمْ: ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَوَاكُمْ“

"There are no two Muslims (male and female) for who lost three children who have reached the age of maturity, to death except that Allah make the parents and these children enter Paradise out of His Mercy." The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, added: "The children will be told, 'Enter Paradise.' But they will respond, 'No, until our parents come with us!' They will be told this three times and they will give the same answer. They will then be told, 'Then enter Paradise, you and your parents.'"

Ibn Majah recorded on the authority of 'Uqbah bin 'Abd As-Sulami, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, say:

”مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ يُتَوَفَّى لَهُ ثَلَاثَةٌ مِنَ الْوَلَدِ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحِنْثَ إِلَّا تَلَقَّوْهُ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ
الْجَنَّةِ الثَّمَانِيَةِ مِنْ أَيِّهَا شَاءَ دَخَلَ“

"Any Muslim who loses three children who have not yet reached the age of puberty will be received by these children at the eight gates of Paradise (telling him) to enter from whichever gate he likes."

The above two *Hadiths* indicate that any child who dies young and is survived by Muslim parents will be among the dwellers of Paradise by Allah's favor and mercy. Therefore, it is inappropriate to regard such children as servants.(1) It is of Allah's honor for the dwellers of Paradise that He makes the children of the dwellers of Paradise among the served and not among the servants.(2) Such children will be of different degrees, in accordance with the grades of their fathers and their fathers' deeds, according to Ibn Taymiyyah.(3)

Some scholars say these boys are among the people of this world and are children of disbelievers. Allah will make them serve the Muslims in Paradise.(4)

This opinion also has no basis.(5) Therefore, we should not delve into discussion about the children of the disbelievers who died before they reached the age of puberty. This is the opinion of Imaam Ahmad and others.(6) This is due to the *Hadith* narrated by Al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about the offspring of the pagans. He said,

”اللهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا عَامِلِينَ“

"Allah knows what they would have done (were they to live)."

A group of scholars among whom is Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah believe that these boys who will go round the dwellers of Paradise serving them are a set of creation that Allah will create in Paradise for that purpose. They are not children of this world. As for the children of this world, when they enter Paradise, their forms will be perfected like the rest of the dwellers of Paradise – in the shape and appearance of Adam, peace be upon him.[1]

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(1) See: *Ruh Al-Ma'ani* 9/27/34
(2) See: *Hadi Al-Arwah* p256
(3) See: *Majmu' Fatawa* 4/287
(4) See: *Tafseer Al-Mawarid* 4/114; *Al-Jami li-Ahkam Al-Qur'an* 9/17/69 ; and *Hadi Al-Arwah* p255
(5) See: *Majmu' Al-Fatawa* 4/279
(6) See: *Ibid* 4/281

This is the indication of the above verses in which the service of the dwellers of Paradise is mentioned. It is also supported by the *Hadith* narrated by Al-Miqdam– may Allah be pleased with him – that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يَمُوتُ سِقطًا وَلَا هَرِمًا– وَإِنَّمَا النَّاسُ فِيمَا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ– إِلَّا بُعِثَ ابْنَ ثَلَاثٍ وَثَلَاثِينَ سَنَةً ، فَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ{كَانَ}عَلَى مَسْحَةِ آدَمَ وَصُورَةِ يُوسُفَ ، وَقَلْبِ أَيُّوبَ ، وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ عَظُمُوا وَفَخُمُوا كَالْجِبَالِ“

“No person will die – ranging from a miscarried foetus to death through old age, for that is the situation with all humans – except that Allah resurrects him as a person of three-years of age. If he happens to be among the dwellers of Paradise, he will be in the shape of Adam, handsomeness of Yusuf and with the heart of Ayyoob (Job), peace be upon them all. But if they happen to be among the dwellers of Hell, then they will be blown and magnified that they will be like mountains in hugeness.”

Therefore, the boys who will serve the dwellers of Paradise are a set of special creation that Allah would create in Paradise like Al-Hur Al 'Iyn and other delights for the people of Paradise. Allah knows best.

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(1) See: *Majmu' Al-Fatawa* 4/279; *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 9/17/69; and *Hadi Al-Arwah* 9256

Dialogue Between Dwellers of Paradise and Dwellers of Hell

Allah informs us about the situation of the people of Paradise that they will talk and express themselves in different forms. Sometimes, they will talk and reminisce about their days in the world and Allah's favor upon them. This manifests in the following statement of Allah:

﴿وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِىٓ أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَمَنَّ ٱللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَىٰنَا عَذَابَ ٱلسَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾ إِنَّا كُنَّا مِن قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُۥ هُوَ ٱلْبَرُّ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٨﴾﴾

“And some of them draw near to others, questioning.Saying: 'Aforetime, we were afraid (of the punishment of Allah) in the midst of our families.' But Allah has been gracious to us, and has saved us from the torment of the Fire.' Verily, We used to invoke Him (Alone and none else) before. Verily, He is Al-Barr (the Most Subtle, Kind, Courteous, and Generous), the Most Merciful.' ” (At-Toor: 52:25-28)

Sometimes, their speech will be praising Allah for blessing them with Paradise as indicated in Allah's statement:

﴿وَقَالُواْ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا ٱلْحَزَنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ ٱلْمُقَامَةِ مِن فَضْلِهِۦ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ ﴿٣٥﴾﴾

“And they will say:'All the praises and thanks are to Allah, Who has removed from us (all) grief. Verily, our Lord is indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate (good deeds and to recompense), Who, out of His Grace, has lodged us in a home that will last forever, where toil will touch us not nor weariness will touch us.' ” (Fatir 35:34,35)

Sometimes, their speech will be about acquainting one another on statements made by the dwellers of Hell. This is indicated in the following verses:

﴿فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِي قَرِينٌ
﴿٥١﴾ يَقُولُ أَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُصَدِّقِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾ أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَدِينُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾
قَالَ هَلْ أَنتُم مُّطَّلِعُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَاطَّلَعَ فَرَآهُ فِي سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾ قَالَ تَاللَّهِ إِن كِدتَّ
لَتُرْدِينِ ﴿٥٦﴾ وَلَوْلَا نِعْمَةُ رَبِّي لَكُنتُ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾ أَفَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَيِّتِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾
إِلَّا مَوْتَتَنَا الْأُولَىٰ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾ إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾ لِمِثْلِ
هَٰذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾﴾

"Then they will turn to one another, mutually questioning. A speaker of them will say: "Verily, I had a companion (in the world), Who used to say: ' Are you among those who believe (in resurrection after death)? (That) when we die and become dust and bones, shall we indeed (be raised up) to receive reward or punishment (according to our deeds)? " (The speaker) said: "Will you look down?" So he looked down and saw him in the midst of the Fire. He said: "By Allah! You have nearly ruined me. "Had it not been for the Grace of my Lord, I would certainly have been among those brought forth (to Hell)." (The dwellers of Paradise will say) "Are we then not to die (any more), except our first death, and we shall not be punished (after we have entered Paradise)?" Truly, this is the supreme success! For the like of this let the workers work." (As-Saffat 37:50-61)

Sometimes, their speech will be in form of a conversation with the dwellers of Hell. Allah informs us of this in a number of places in the Qur'an.

In *Surah Al-A'raaf*, Allah says:

﴿وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ أَن قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا فَهَلْ وَجَدتُّم مَّا
وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا ۖ قَالُوا نَعَمْ ۚ فَأَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ بَيْنَهُمْ أَن لَّعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾﴾

"And the dwellers of Paradise will call out to the dwellers of the Fire (saying): 'We have indeed found true what our Lord had promised us; have you also found true, what your Lord promised (warnings)?' They shall say: "Yes." Then a crier will proclaim between them:'The Curse of Allah is on the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrong-doers).' " (Al-A'raaf 7:44)

In the above verse, Allah informs us about a debate that will take place between the people of the truth and the people of falsehood after the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell will have settled in their respective abodes.(1)

The dwellers of Paradise's calling out to the dwellers of Hell is not to inform them about the delight and bliss they have in Paradise or in order to know the situation of the people of Hell. It is meant to scold and censure and cause them grief so that they can increase in sorrow and distress.(2)

The dwellers of Paradise will call out to the dwellers of Hell with the following statement:

﴿أَن قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا فَهَلْ وَجَدتُّم مَّا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا﴾

"We have indeed found true what our Lord had promised us; have you also found true, what your Lord promised?"

The promise is the one that Allah made through His Messengers, peace be upon them – that whoever believed and obeyed Allah in this world will be rewarded and that whoever disbelieved and disobeyed Him will be punished.(1)

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari 2/445; At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer 14/43;* and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem 3/412*

(2) See: *Al-Kash-shaf 2/80; Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an 4/7/209; Fath Al-Qadeer 2/207*

Ibn 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – said: "The people of Paradise will find what they have been promised of reward and the people of Hell will find what they have been promised of punishment. For, Allah has promised the dwellers of Paradise delight and honor and all good things that are known and unknown to humans. He also promised the dwellers of Hell every disgrace and torment known to humans and unknown.(2)

The dwellers of Hell will respond to the question of the dwellers of Paradise in the affirmative as mentioned in the verse.

One may ask: How can this call occur in spite of the great distance that will be between the dwellers of Paradise and dwellers of Hell?

The answer is: Allah – High and Exalted – is Capable of giving strength to voices and hearings in such a way that will bring faraway things very near.(3)

Then the condition of the Hereafter is different from that of this world. Now, it is possible for one to hear the voice of someone who is very far from him. This appeared very strange until recently. In our contemporary age, there is hardly anyone in this world who would regard this as strange after the invention of devices such as wired or wireless phones through which people converse with one another in spite of thousands of miles between them.(4)

If this is the situation of this world and the inventions of its fallible human inhabitants, then the situation of the Hereafter and

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/445; and *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 2/474

(2) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/446; and *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 14/83

(3) See: *Tafseer Al-Khazin* 2/89; *Al-Futuhat Al-Ilahiyyah* 2/144

(4) See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 8/424

the overwhelming power of Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, should be more appreciated. Allah – High and Exalted – is Capable of creating powers of seeing and hearing in eyes and ears. Nothing is difficult for Him. For, His power is massive and His Names are Holy.(1)

It is mentioned in the Qur'an that Allah will address the dwellers of Paradise concerning His promise to them but it is not mentioned that He would address the dwellers of Hell. The reason for this is that His addressing the dwellers of Paradise is, in itself, a kind of honor for them; a condition that is very appropriate to the situation of the believers. As for the disbelievers and the hypocrites, they do not deserve this kind of address.(2)

After the question and answer that would take place between the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell, a caller will proclaim to the hearing of both groups: *"The Curse of Allah is on the wrong-doers!"*

Who are the wrongdoers? They are those described by Allah in the following verse:

﴿ ٱلَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَهُم بِٱلْآخِرَةِ كَٰفِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾ ﴾

"Those who hindered (men) from the Path of Allah, and would seek to make it crooked, and they were disbelievers in the Hereafter." (Al-A'raf 7:45)

They are those who disbelieved in Allah, turned away from the right path and prevented other people from accepting the law of Allah and the message brought by the Prophets. Sometimes they prevented the people from following the guidance through and sometimes through deception. They rebelled against the correct path, denied the establishment of the Hour and Resurrection in the Hereafter, they denied the existence of reward and punishment and they indulged in unlawful deeds and utterances with impunity, thereby becoming the worst of the creation in sayings and deeds. We seek refuge with Allah from them and their evils.(1)

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(1) See: *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 7/64

(2) See: *Ibid.*

Allah says:

﴿وَنَادَىٰٓ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِ أَصۡحَٰبَ ٱلۡجَنَّةِ أَنۡ أَفِيضُواْ عَلَيۡنَا مِنَ ٱلۡمَآءِ أَوۡ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ ٱللَّهُۚ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ حَرَّمَهُمَا عَلَى ٱلۡكَٰفِرِينَ ٥٠﴾

"And the dwellers of the Fire will call to the dwellers of Paradise: 'Pour on us some water or anything that *Allah* has provided you with.' They will say: 'Both (water and provision) *Allah* has forbidden to the disbelievers.'" (Al-A'raaf 7:50)

In this verse, Allah informs us about the helplessness of the dwellers of Hell after they will have entered it and experienced its severe torments such as hunger and thirst – which are part of their recompense for their disobeying Allah and disregarding His commands while they were in this world.(2)

'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – said: "After the people of Heights will have entered Paradise, the dwellers of Hell will desire respite after a despair and they would say, 'Lord, we have relatives from among the dwellers of Paradise, so permit us to see them and speak to them.' They will then be allowed to look at their relations in Paradise and see the delight they are in and they will recognize them; but the people of Paradise will not recognize them due to their blackened faces. The dwellers of Hell will then call the dwellers of Paradise by their names and inform them about their blood ties.

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/448; *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 2/475; *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 7/65; and *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 14/86

(2) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/473; and *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 3/419

One of the dwellers of Hell will call his brother or father from among the dwellers of Paradise and say, 'brother, – or father – I am burning. Pour on me some water or anything that Allah has provided you with!' But the dwellers of Paradise will answer them saying, 'Allah has forbidden them to the disbelievers!'"(1)

Will the dwellers of Paradise hear the call of the dwellers of Hell in spite of the distance between them?

The answer is: The noble verse explicitly mentions that the call will take place and this necessitates that each of the two groups will hear the speech of the other. This is logically possible, as it is also possible that they can see each other when the screen between them is removed.(2)

The response of the people of Paradise that 'both water and provision is forbidden to the disbelievers' indicates that provisions of Paradise are forbidden to the disbelievers whose descriptions are mentioned in the succeeding verse thus:

﴿ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّخَذُواْ دِينَهُمۡ لَهۡوٗا وَلَعِبٗا وَغَرَّتۡهُمُ ٱلۡحَيَوٰةُ ٱلدُّنۡيَا﴾

"(Those) who took their religion as an amusement and play, and the life of the world deceived them." (Al-A'raf 7:51)

For, when they were invited unto believing in Allah, they mock those who invited them and they were deceived by the vain and finite enjoyment they had until death came to them.

Then Allah informs us how they would be forgotten in the apportionment of blessing and mercy and be abandoned in their eternal punishment. Allah says:

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(1) See: *Ma'alim At-Tanzeel* 2/475; *Zad Al-Maseer* 3/208; *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 4/305; *Tafseer Ath-Thawri* p113; and *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/474

(2) See: *Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz* 7/71; and *Al-Bahr Al-Muheet* 4/304

﴿فَٱلْيَوْمَ نَنسَىٰهُمْ كَمَا نَسُوا۟ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِهِمْ هَٰذَا وَمَا كَانُوا۟ بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ (٥١)﴾

"So this Day We shall forget them as they forgot their meeting of this Day, and as they used to reject Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations)." (Al-A'raf 7:51)

Allah will then abandon them in the disgraceful torment as they abandoned working towards meeting the Day of Resurrection and refused to make necessary preparations for it by enduring hardship in the course of obeying Allah in the life of this world.(1)

It is reported from Abu Darda, may Allah be pleased with him, that he said that Allah will make the dwellers of Hell hungry that they may increase in torment. They will then seek relief and they will be provided with food that is thorny and poisonous and that neither nourishes nor avails against hunger. They will again seek relief from hunger and they will be provided with food that chokes. When they seek relief from thirst, they will be fed with water and pus through iron hooks and their intestines will be cut as a result. They will appeal to the dwellers of Paradise for relief and the latter will tell them that provisions of Paradise are forbidden to the disbelievers. When they realize that all their entreaties are to no avail, they will then request that end be put to their lives or that they should be removed from Hell. But Allah will say to them,

﴿ٱخْسَـُٔوا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ (١٠٨)﴾

"Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!" (Al-Mu'minoon 23:108)

It is then that they will realize that nothing good will ever happen to them, and they will start screaming and wailing.(2)

In *Surah Al-Muddath-thir*, Allah says:

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(1) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/475

(2) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 14/93

﴿إِلَّآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلْيَمِينِ (٣٩) فِى جَنَّٰتٍ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ (٤٠) عَنِ ٱلْمُجْرِمِينَ (٤١) مَا سَلَكَكُمْ
فِى سَقَرَ (٤٢) قَالُوا۟ لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ ٱلْمُصَلِّينَ (٤٣) وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمُ ٱلْمِسْكِينَ (٤٤) وَكُنَّا
نَخُوضُ مَعَ ٱلْخَآئِضِينَ (٤٥) وَكُنَّا نُكَذِّبُ بِيَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ (٤٦) حَتَّىٰٓ أَتَىٰنَا ٱلْيَقِينُ (٤٧)﴾

"Except those on the Right, (i.e. the pious true believers of Islamic Monotheism). In Gardens (Paradise) they will ask one another, About Al-Mujrimoon (polytheists, criminals, disbelievers), (and they will say to them): 'What has caused you to enter Hell?' They will say: 'We were not of those who used to offer their Salaat (prayers), nor we used to feed Al-Miskeen (the poor); and we used to talk falsehood (all that which Allah hated) with vain talkers, and we used to belie the Day of Recompense until there came to us (the death) that is certain.' " (Al-Muddath-thir 74:39-47)

In these noble verses, Allah informs us that the People of the Right (dwellers of Paradise) will ask the criminals about what caused them to enter Hell. And the latter will respond that they are being punished in Hell for abandoning prayer, refusing to pay *Zakah*, their talking falsehood along with vain talkers and their belying the Day of Resurrection until death came to them.(1)

The purpose of this question is to scold and shame them.(2)

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(1) See: *Jami, Al-Bayan* 14/29/166

(2) See: *At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer* 30:211

Position of the People of Elevations *(Al-A'raaf)* before Entering Paradise

Mentioning of the People of Elevations is made in the Qur'an in *Surah* named after them, *'Al-A'raaf'*.

Allah the Lord of *Honor* and Majesty says:

﴿ وَبَيْنَهُمَا حِجَابٌ وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ يَعْرِفُونَ كُلًّا بِسِيمَاهُمْ وَنَادَوْا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ أَن
سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا وَهُمْ يَطْمَعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾ ۞ وَإِذَا صُرِفَتْ أَبْصَارُهُمْ تِلْقَاءَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ
قَالُوا رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَنَادَىٰ أَصْحَابُ الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالًا يَعْرِفُونَهُم بِسِيمَاهُمْ
قَالُوا مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنكُمْ جَمْعُكُمْ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ أَهَٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمْتُمْ لَا
يَنَالُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَنتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

"And between them will be a barrier screen and on Al-A'raaf (a wall with elevated places) will be men (whose good and evil deeds would be equal in scale), who would recognize all (of the Paradise and Hell people), by their marks (the dwellers of Paradise by their white faces and the dwellers of Hell by their black faces), they will call out to the dwellers of Paradise, "Salaamun 'Alaikum' (peace be on you), and at that time they (men on Al-A'raaf) will not yet have entered it (Paradise), but they will hope to enter (it) with certainty. And when their eyes will be turned towards the dwellers of the Fire, they will say: Our Lord! Place us not with the people who are Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers). And the men on Al-A'raaf (the wall) will call unto the men whom they would recognize by their marks, saying:'Of what benefit to you were your great numbers (and hoards of wealth), and your arrogance against Faith? , Are they those, of whom you swore that Allah would never show them mercy. (Behold! It has been said to them): "Enter Paradise, no fear shall be on you, nor shall you grieve." (Al-A'raf 7:46-49)

In the above verses, Allah informs us that there will be a screening barrier between Paradise and Hell and explains that this screening barrier is the wall He mentions in *Surah* Al-Hadeed, in His statement:

﴿ يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا انظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِن نُّورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا
وَرَاءَكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوا نُورًا فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُم بِسُورٍ لَّهُ بَابٌ بَاطِنُهُ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهُ مِن قِبَلِهِ
الْعَذَابُ ﴿١٣﴾

"On the Day when the hypocrites - men and women - will say to the believers: ' Wait for us! Let us get something from your light!" It will be said: 'Go back to your rear! Then seek a light!" So a wall will be put up between them, with a gate therein. Inside it will be mercy, and outside it will be torment.' " (Al-Hadeed 57:13)

So, Paradise will be inside the wall and Hell will be outside.(1) It is this wall that Allah refers to as *Al-A'raaf.*

Ibn Abbaas – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – said: "*Al-A'raaf* means an elevated place." He also said: "It is a hill that serves as screening wall between Paradise and Hell. It has a crest like that of rooster."(2)

In the light of this explanation, *Al-A'raaf* is neither part of Paradise nor part of Hell. It is rather a wall overlooking both dwellings and the one standing on it will be able to see the dwellers of Paradise and the dwellers of Hell.(3)

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(1) See: *Tadhkirah Al-Arib* by Ibn Al-Jawzi 1/178; *Tafseer Al-Manar* 8/430; and *Adwa' Al-Bayan* 2/300

(2) See: *Tafseer Mujahid* 1/237; and *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/449

(3) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/450

Differences among the scholars regarding the people of *Al-A'raaf*

Some scholars say: They are a people whose righteous and evil deeds are equal; they have enough righteous deeds to make them escape Hell but their evil deeds are too much to allow them enter Paradise. They will remain on the Heights until Allah will decide on them as He wills and make them enter Paradise through His mercy. This is the opinion of Hudahyfah bin Al-Yaman, Ibn 'Abbaas, Ibn Mas'ood – may Allah be pleased with them all – and a number scholars from the righteous predecessors and those who came after them.(1)

Some scholars say they are righteous people who are jurists and scholars; some say they are prophets and some say they are martyrs.(2)

Some say they are some good believers who finished from their own works and dedicated their time to oversee the affairs of others. Some say they are children born out of illegal sexual intercourse.(3)

However, what the verse indicates is that they are men from among the dwellers of Paradise whose admittance to Paradise would be delayed for some reasons.(4)

The majority of the scholars are of the opinion that they are people with equal degrees of good and righteous deeds; whose righteous are not weighty enough to make them enter Paradise

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(1) See: *Kitab Az-Zuhd* by Hanad 1/151; *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/452; *Tadhkirah Al-Arib* 1/179; *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 3/414; and *Al-Budur As-Safirah fil-Umur al-Akhirah* p279

(2) See: *Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azeem* 3/416

(3) See: *Al-Budur As-Safirah fil-Umur al-Akhirah* p298; and *Fath Al-Qadeer* 2/207

(4) See: *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 4/7/212

and their evil deeds are not bad enough to make them enter Hell. As a result, they will be made to stand on the Heights as long as Allah would wish.(1)

This is the correct opinion due to the *Hadith* recorded by At-Tabari on the authority of 'Amr bin Jarir who reported that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about the people of *Al-A'raaf* and he said:

"They would be the last of Allah's servants to be decided upon (on the Day of Resurrection). After Allah will have finished deciding among the servants, He will say them, 'You are a people whose righteous deeds have removed you from Hell but are short of making you enter Paradise. I am going to liberate you from Hell; enter Paradise and move around therein as you like!"

This opinion is also substantiated by the supplication mentioned in the verse; for it befits the situation of someone whose good and evil deeds are of equal weight, and are therefore kept waiting with their fate unknown to them.(2)

Allah will place the People of the Heights in that position so that they may know the dwellers of Paradise by their signs. They will know them by their beautiful and brilliant faces, with illuminations of bliss on them. They will know the dwellers of Hell with their gloomy and ugly faces, with blueness in their eyes. This is according to Ibn 'Abbaas, Mujahid and Al-Hasan Al-Basri.(3)

Allah explains the signs of the dwellers of Paradise and dwellers of Hell in a number of verses, among which are as follows:

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(1) See: *Ma'ani Al-Qur'an* by Al-Farra 1/379; *Tafseer Al-Manar* 8/433; and *Ta - seer Al-Kareem Ar-Rahmaan* 3/34

(2) See: *Tafseer Al-Manar* 8/434

(3) See: *Tafseer Mujahid* 1/237; *Ma'ani Al-Qur'an* 1/379; *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/472; *Tafseer Al-Mawardi* 2/30; and *Al-Jami' li Ahkaam Al-Qur'an* 4/7/212

﴿ يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ ﴾

"On the Day (i.e. the Day of Resurrection) when some faces will become white and some faces will become black."

(*Aal 'Imraan* 3:106)

﴿ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾ وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَاسِرَةٌ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

"Some faces that Day shall be Naadirah (shining and radiant), looking at their Lord (Allah). And some faces, that Day, will be Baasirah (dark, gloomy, frowning, and sad)." (Al-Qiyamah 75:22-25)

﴿ وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ ﴿٣٨﴾ ضَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ ﴿٤٠﴾ تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ ﴿٤١﴾ ﴾

"Some faces that Day will be bright (those of true believers in Islamic Monotheism), laughing, rejoicing at good news (of Paradise). And other faces, that Day, will be dust-stained, darkness will cover them." ('Abasa 80:38-41)

The people of the Heights will look at the dwellers of Paradise and dwellers of Hell. When they glance at the former they will say to them, 'Peace be upon you!' But when they look at the people of Hell and see how they have been deformed, they will ask Allah not to include them among the wrongdoers who wronged their own souls and brought upon themselves Allah's wrath and torment.(1) We ask Allah for safety.

In the noble verse, Allah informs us that the people of the Heights will aspire to enter Paradise; and Allah will only cast that aspiration in their hearts as a result of the honor He wants to confer on them.(2)

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(1) See: *Tafseer Tabari* 12/466
(2) See: *Tadhkirah Al-Arib* 1/179; and *Tayseer Al-Kareem* Ar-Rahmaan 3/32

In the same verse, Allah also informs us that the people of the Heights will call on some men from among the dwellers of Hell whom they knew while they were in the world and who were the leaders, tyrants and oppressors. They will say to them:

﴿ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنكُمْ جَمْعُكُمْ وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾ ﴾

"Of what benefit to you were your great numbers (and hoards of wealth), and your arrogance against Faith?" (Al-A'raaf 7:48)

Their wealth which they used to amass and hoard in this world and their arrogance and contempt for the truth and fellow humans will be of no avail to them.(1)

Meanwhile, the disbelievers who will already be in Hell will swear that the people of the Heights will join them. It is then that Allah will scold them saying:

﴿ أَهَٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمْتُمْ لَا يَنَالُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ ﴾

"Are they those, of whom you swore that Allah would never show them mercy?" (Al-A'raaf 7:49)

This statement is to rebuke and scold them for the insults they used to utter against the weak Muslims in the world.(2)

Allah will then command the people of the Heights to enter Paradise and they will enter by Allah's mercy that encompasses all things.(3)

Allah says:

﴿ أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٤﴾ ﴾

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(1) See: *Tafseer Al-Baydawi* 1/340
(2) See: *Fath Al-Qadir* 2/208
(3) See: *Tafseer At-Tabari* 12/469

"No doubt! Verily, the Auliya' of Allah [i.e. those who believe in the Oneness of Allah and fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden), and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)] no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve. (They are) those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism), and used to fear Allah much (by abstaining from evil deeds and sins and by doing righteous deeds),For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present world (i.e. through a righteous dream seen by the person himself or shown to others),and in the hereafter ,No change can there be in the Words of Allah. This is indeed the supreme success." (Yunus 10:62-63)

* * *

Conclusion

All praise is due to Allah through Whose favor all good things are perfected. We thank Him for making it easy for us to complete this blessed work. We equally thank Him for His uncountable favors upon us – both known and unknown. It is Allah alone unto whom all praise is due. He is One and He has no partner and we cannot extol Him enough as He is as He extols Himself. He is the Lord of honor and majesty. His authority is great and Names and Attributes are holy.

Blessings and peace be upon the Prophet, who is the giver of glad tiding and the guide unto the straight path – Muhammad son of Abdullah. Peace and blessings also be upon his Companions and their successors and all those who follow their guidance till the Day of Resurrection.

To proceed, Allah – High and Exalted – created the creatures and He knows about them more than they know about themselves. He knows what is good for them and what can bring them happiness in this world and in the Hereafter. He makes Paradise a reward for what they put forth while they are in this world, though Paradise is of the matters of the Unseen. It is upon this that the Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,, nurtured and trained his noble Companions – may Allah be pleased with them. Through Islam and its teachings, these Companions conquered the world, attained Glory and leadership and became an important nation that neither begged an enemy for peace nor surrendered to ignominy. As a result, it attained the pleasure of Allah Who says:

﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَخۡشَوۡنَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلۡغَيۡبِ لَهُم مَّغۡفِرَةٞ وَأَجۡرٞ كَبِيرٞ ١٢﴾

"Verily, those who fear their Lord unseen (i.e. they do not see Him, nor His Punishment in the Hereafter), theirs will be forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. Paradise)." (Al-Mulk 67:12)

They attained all that through their following of Allah's law. Therefore, if the Muslims of today want to attain power and leadership and reclaim their lost Glory and victory then they need to implement the law of Allah in all aspects of their lives. For, the latter generation of this *Ummah* can never attain uprightness except through means by which its earlier generation attained it.

Today, whenever the advocates of progress and modernity want to encourage people to do something, they spur them with what they call material and incentives that are certainly fleeting however long it takes.

But the Creator – High and Exalted – has placed a great incentive that never changes or ends throughout ages and does never changes with the change of times and places. It is an incentive that is suitable for all times and places. It has no equal or rival.

That incentive is Paradise that Allah has prepared for His righteous servants wherein there is what no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard and no human heart has ever imagined. It is an everlasting incentive that is infinite and unending.

Hence, it is incumbent upon callers to the way of Allah and reformers to impress this in pepoles' minds. For, Paradise is the greatest incentive for the believing souls that aspire to attain the noblest goal: the company of the Prophet, the sincere servants of Allah, the martyrs and the pious ones. May Allah – in His infinite Mercy – include us among those who enter that blissful abode.

Before ending this work, I would like to mention the major points that could be deduced therefrom:

1. Paradise is true; it currently exists and it is among the matters of the Unseen that a Muslim must believe in.

2. It is given great attention by the verses of the Qur'an and the Prophetic *Hadiths*; and its importance is emphasized.

3. Belief in Paradise encourages a Muslim to do righteous deeds in order to get there. The positive effect of this belief on the society is that it makes it righteous society where mutual love, brotherhood and good relationship prevail.

4. The Muslims' belief in Paradise has great impact on spiritual nurturing of Muslim soldiers whenever they are faced with difficulties. It makes them more steadfast and more persevering.

5. Entering Paradise can only be through Allah's Mercy; and it is of Allah's mercy upon His servant to make righteous deeds easy for him.

6. Paradise has many names; and having many names indicates nobility and excellent position of the named.

7. Paradise consists of various gardens of different sizes, trees, living apartments, palaces, rivers and other kinds of delights.

8. There is neither day nor night in Paradise.

9. Paradise is of varying grades; and its dwellers will be able to see one another as clearly as the shining star in the horizons is seen. The highest of its grades is 'Al-*Wasilah*', which is exclusively for Prophet Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,.

10. The delights of Paradise are of many different kinds. They are unending and everlasting; and nothing thereof will be denied to the dwellers of Paradise.

11. All that is mentioned of the bliss of Paradise has no

equivalent in this world but only in names.

12. The greatest aspect of the delight of Paradise is glancing at the noble Countenance of Allah – High and Exalted.

13. The women of Paradise are described with attributes of perfection, purity and beauty. They are chaste and preserved and they do not expose their beauties even when they are in Paradise.

14. Rivers of Paradise are of different kinds; they all originate from *Firdaws*.

15. Fruits of Paradise are many and of different kinds. They resemble one another in beauty and ripeness and nothing thereof can be looked down upon. Whenever a fruit is plucked, another one spontaneously grows in its place.

16. Conditions of the Hereafter are different from those of this earthly life. Eating and drinking in Paradise are not for repelling hunger and thirst, neither are they for preserving health. They are only for enjoyment. In Paradise, remnants of food and drinking are expelled from the body in form of sweat that exudes the aroma of musk.

17. The dwellers of Paradise will not enter it until after they have been purified from all their sins and misdeeds.

18. The dwellers of Paradise shall live in perpetual light. They will never sleep for sleeping is a brother of death.

19. The dwellers of Paradise will not be touched with anything that may affect their health.

20. The dwellers of Paradise will be people of the same age. They will have everlasting youthfulness and they will never grow old.

21. Of Allah's favor upon the dwellers of Paradise and His pleasure with them is His greeting of them and addressing them in Paradise.

22. The dwellers of Paradise will greet one another and reminisce on their life on the earth.

23. The dwellers of Paradise will be served; and their servants are like preserved pearls.

24. The dwellers of Paradise will converse with the dwellers of Hell as a way of scolding the latter and increasing their torment.

25. The end of the people of *Al-A'raaf* (the Heights) is Paradise through Allah's mercy and generosity.

The noble reader will find these summaries fully discussed in this work. It will also be realized in the course of the reading this work that this eternal and endless delight can never be attained through lineage, marriage relationship or friendship. It can only be attained through one thing: piety. Allah says:

﴿تِلْكَ ٱلْجَنَّةُ ٱلَّتِي نُورِثُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا مَن كَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿٦٣﴾﴾

"Such is the Paradise which We shall give as an inheritance to those of Our slaves who have been pious and righteous." (Maryam 19:63)

Piety is the fruit of sincere belief and firm certainty. It implies carrying out the commands of Allah and His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, at all times and abstaining from all things forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, of false creeds, bad utterances, evil deeds and despicable manners.

Therefore, I advise myself and anyone who has got some knowledge about the delight of the Abode of Peace not to spare any effort to be among its inheritors. That is by having belief that makes him reach the degree of certainty; and piety that gives him a criterion which is a light of the heart and by which he can differentiate between truth and falsehood, useful and harmful, and good and evil in all aspects of life.

The combination of faith and piety is the tie of friendship between a servant and his Lord. Allah says:

﴿أَلَآ إِنَّ أَوۡلِيَآءَ ٱللَّهِ لَا خَوۡفٌ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا هُمۡ يَحۡزَنُونَ ٦٢ ٱلَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُواْ وَكَانُواْ يَتَّقُونَ ٦٣ لَهُمُ ٱلۡبُشۡرَىٰ فِي ٱلۡحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَفِي
ٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۚ لَا تَبۡدِيلَ لِكَلِمَٰتِ ٱللَّهِۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ ٱلۡفَوۡزُ ٱلۡعَظِيمُ ٦٤﴾

“No doubt! Verily, the Auliyaa’ of Allah [i.e. those who believe in the Oneness of *Allah* and fear *Allah* much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden), and love *Allah* much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)] no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve. (They are) those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism), and used to fear Allah much (by abstaining from evil deeds and sins and by doing righteous deeds). For them are glad tidings, in the life of the present world (i.e. through a righteous dream seen

صفة الجنة في القرآن الكريم

[باللغة الإنجليزية]

Writing about Paradise is of great importance in view of its significance in the belief of a Muslim. This belief makes him eligible for enjoyment of the bliss and the happiness of the Hereafter. It is not a belief that is limited to the life of this finite and ephemeral world only as compared to the everlasting Hereafter. Rather, it is a great creed that links the life of man in this world to that of the Hereafter so that his vision will not be restricted to this world alone but extends to the Hereafter.

Belief in Paradise is one of the fundamentals of faith. The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about faith and he answered, "Faith is to believe in Allah, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers and in the Last Day; and to believe in pre-decree, its good and bad."

(Recorded by Muslim)

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